

# PSYCHICAL RESEARCH FOR THE PLAIN MAN

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S. M. KINGSFORD



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PSYCHICAL RESEARCH FOR THE  
PLAIN MAN



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BY  
S. M. KINGSFORD

1920

LONDON  
KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRUBNER & CO., LTD.  
NEW YORK: E. P. DUTTON & CO.

1920

BF1031  
.K5

List  
Publications  
Massachusetts





## FOREWORD

PROFESSOR HENRI BERGSON, in his Presidential address to the Society for Psychical Research in 1913, after discussing the differences between scientific, historical and judicial certainty, stated :-- " I am led to believe in telepathy, just as I believe in the defeat of the Invincible Armada. My belief is not the mathematical certainty that the demonstration of Pythagoras' theorem gives me, it is not the physical certainty that I have of the law of the fall of bodies, but it is at least all the certainty that we obtain in a historical or judicial matter."

Whilst it is obvious that scientific questions, and to a lesser extent historical questions, must be left to experts ; yet the ultimate decision of *Guilty*, or *Not Guilty*, in a trial for murder rest with twelve jurymen, and not with the expert judge ; though the summing up of the judge is intended to instruct the jury, and influence their verdict.

It has unfortunately happened in the matter of evidence for supernormal occurrences, with which is involved the hope of life after death, that the judge and the jury, the expert and the man in the street, seldom or never come into contact. For nearly forty years the Society for Psychical Research acting as judge, has been summing up in an impartial manner the evidence for and against supernormal occurrences ; but the jury, the general public, knows practically nothing about either the evidence or the summing up.

The general public derives its ideas either from paragraphs in newspapers, which mostly turn the whole thing into ridicule, without argument ; or from books of 'ghost stories' written by people who treat the existence of beings they call 'Elementals,' as an established fact, and mention chats with Charlotte Brontë as everyday occurrences.

It is true that a certain number of most valuable books have been written by various individual members of the S.P.R. ; but these writers, being learned men, are inclined to emphasize abstract theories which the general public is hardly able to grasp, rather than to bring forward the evidence for, and details of concrete facts.

I am an unlearned woman, and my object in writing this book has been to produce in an intelligible and interesting form the evidence that seems to prove that supernormal events have occurred, together with comments on the credibility or otherwise of the evidence by S.P.R. experts. I have made but few comments myself on the various cases, which I have quoted verbatim wherever possible : I have preferred to leave my readers to draw their own conclusions from the evidence I put before them. But I ask that they should endeavour to consider the matter in an unbiased and judicial spirit ; accepting or rejecting alleged facts according to the weight of evidence given by witnesses who appear to be worthy of credence, or the reverse.

I desire to render sincere thanks to the Council of the Society for Psychical Research for their kind permission to make extracts from the *Proceedings* and *Journal*. My hope is that my humble effort to act as interpreter between the learned Society and the plain man in the street may cause the latter to appreciate the work of the former better than he has done hitherto.

I also wish to acknowledge gratefully the permission accorded by Messrs. Longmans Green & Co. to insert an extract from *The Making of Religion*, by the late Mr. Andrew Lang (see page 54) : and I heartily thank Mrs. Salter and Miss Newton for their kind help.

S. M. KINGSFORD.

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# PSYCHIC RESEARCH

## CHAPTER I

### TELEPATHY

THE word *Telepathy* was coined by Mr. F. W. H. Myers, who defined its meaning to be 'the communication of impressions of any kind from one mind to another, independently of the recognised channels of sense.' The literal meaning of the word *Telepathy* is *feeling at a distance*, and Mr. Myers noted, (*Human Personality*, Glossary), "the *distance* between agent and percipient need in fact only be such as to prevent the operation of whatever known modes of perception are not excluded by the other conditions of the case. *Telepathy* may thus exist between two men in the same room as truly as between one man in England and another in Australia, or between one man still living on earth, and another man long since departed."

Most people have themselves had telepathic experiences in a greater or less degree: those who live together know how often the same idea, for no apparent reason, occurs to them both at once. If when this happens you investigate, you will often find that one of the people in question derived the idea from an orderly sequence of thought; whilst to the other it came suddenly and unaccountably.

In that case the former was, in psychical language the *agent*, and the latter the *percipient*. Or it may be you suddenly feel anxiety concerning a friend hundreds or even thousands of miles away; and subsequently discover that about the same time that friend, being in trouble or emotion of some sort, was thinking of you.

These and similar incidents happen so frequently that very few people would try to argue that they are due merely to chance coincidence, but would be inclined to share the opinion of Dr. Johnson. When Boswell "introduced the subject of second sight, and other mysterious manifestations, and suggested the fulfilment might happen by chance, Johnson said 'Yes, sir, but they have happened so often that mankind have agreed to think them not fortuitous.'"

Though telepathy in common parlance denotes thought-transference between human minds or brains, there seems some probability that it is in reality the universal language of all animals, the use of which in the case of *homo sapiens* has been considerably weakened by his invention of articulate language. Sir Oliver Lodge has pointed out in "Raymond" that the sounds of spoken language, and the signs of written language, differing as they do amongst various races, are themselves artificial and unnatural. The acquirement of these artificial means of communication has probably weakened, and to a great extent destroyed, man's natural power of direct thought-transference, which there is some reason to think is far stronger in savages than in civilized men. As regards animals other than man, the unanimity in action of a flock of starlings or a pack of wolves, to say nothing of the understanding often established between individual animals without exchange of a sound, are inexplicable except on the

hypothesis of some kind of telepathic communication. There is also some definite evidence that thought-transference between men and animals occasionally, at any rate, takes place.

It is an absolute necessity to commence any treatise on psychical research with the subject of telepathy, because it would be difficult to weigh judicially the evidence for and against the possible source of origin of the various types of psychic phenomena, without adequate knowledge of the proved scope of telepathy, and at least a glimpse of its unproved possibilities. It is probable that telepathy in some degree is a factor in every supernatural occurrence; indeed many people are of opinion that telepathy from living persons is the only factor, and adequately accounts for all the supernatural sounds and visions, as well as mental impressions, which have ever been experienced. And those who believe that some at least of these phenomena are derived from disembodied or unembodied spirits, would probably allow that telepathy may be the means by which these communicate with their friends still in the flesh.

Unlike most other psychic phenomena, telepathy admits of experimental investigation; in this chapter I propose to deal exclusively with a selection from various series of experiments, leaving spontaneous cases to be given under the heads of subsequent chapters. But here a difficulty arises: experimental investigations, though important, are apt to be extremely dull to read about. For this reason a friend of mine with considerable literary experience, knowing that this book is intended to be read by the general public, earnestly urged me not to make experimental telepathy the subject of my first chapter; she obviously feared that if I did, it

would also be the last chapter for the majority of readers.

Fortunately, however, one series of telepathic experiments has recently been published which is really as interesting as an exciting game. For nearly six years, that is to say from the Spring of 1910 to the end of 1915, Professor Gilbert Murray and his family have conducted a series of experiments of which a careful record has been kept. Professor Murray gave most interesting details concerning some of these experiments, in his Presidential Address to S.P.R. in July 1915, since published in *Proceedings* Vol. XXIX. And the same issue of *Proceedings* contains an article by the late Mrs. A. W. Verrall, dealing with the whole series, at some few of which she had been present and had taken part.

Professor Murray explained, "The method followed is this: I go out of the room and of course out of earshot. Someone in the room, generally my eldest daughter, thinks of a scene or an incident or anything she likes, and says it aloud. It is written down, and I am called. I come in, usually take my daughter's hand, and then, if I have luck, describe in detail what she thought of. The least disturbance of our customary method, change of time or place, presence of strangers, controversy, and especially noise, is apt to make things go wrong. I become myself somewhat over-sensitive and irritable, though not, I believe, to a noticeable degree. —There are many cases of correct pictures. E.g. Subject set: 'I think of grandfather at the Harrow and Winchester cricket match, dropping hot cigar-ash on Miss Thompson's parasol.' *My guess* (verbatim): 'Why, this is grandfather. He's at a match—why, it's absurd: he seems to be dropping



ashes on a lady's parasol.' . . . Much more often, however, the information comes not through any particular sense but through what I may call a sort of indeterminate sense of quality or atmosphere. For instance, I almost always, if I am going right, get first a feeling of the country in which the scene or incident is set. I say, 'This is Russian,' 'This is Italian,' 'This seems to be tropical,' or the like. Also I am apt to know whether a thing comes from a book or from real life, and the taste of the book is apt to be very strong. One would never confuse Thackeray and Tolstoy, for instance. A rather instructive case and one in which I do think I was rather clever, referred to a scene in a book which I had not read. I give it more at length.

Subject set: A scene in a story by Strindberg. A man and woman in a lighthouse, the man lying fallen on the floor, and the woman bending over him, looking at him and hoping that he is dead.

My guess: 'A horrid atmosphere, full of hatred and discomfort. A book, not real life. A book I have not read. Not Russian, not Italian, but foreign. I cannot get it. There is a round tower, a man and woman in a round tower; but it is not Maeterlinck. Not like him. I should guess it was Strindberg. The woman is bending over him and hating him, hoping he is dead.'

Another Strindberg scene, also from a book I had not read, raises a rather interesting point. The subject set was an old, cross, poor, disappointed schoolmaster eating crabs for lunch at a restaurant, and insisting on having female crabs. I got the atmosphere, the man, the lunch in the restaurant on crabs, and thought I had finished, when my daughter said, 'What kind of crabs?' I felt rather impatient and said: 'Oh, Lord, I don't know. Female crabs.'

That is, the response to the question came automatically, with no preparation, while I thought I could not give it. I may add that I had never before heard of there being any inequality between the sexes among crabs, regarded as food."

Mrs. Verrall described the experiments at which she was present, as follows:—"February 18, 1914. Yesterday, February 17, between tea and dinner, I was present at a series of experiments in thought-transference, in which Professor Murray acted as percipient and his daughter, Mrs. Toynbee, as agent. There were present, in the study, Lady Mary Murray, Miss Blomfield (who took notes), Mr. Arnold Toynbee (who left after the first or second experiment), and myself, besides the two principals.

Professor Murray went out of the room, and the door was shut. Mrs. Toynbee then decided on a subject to transfer, and described it in a low voice; Miss Blomfield recorded it, and no other word was spoken. (Once Lady Mary Murray asked if the note was made). Then Lady Mary Murray opened the door, in silence, and Professor Murray came in, held Mrs. Toynbee's hand, sometimes standing, sometimes sitting, and proceeded to describe his impressions. . .

So far as I observed, and I observed with care, Professor Murray never looked at Mrs. Toynbee after he had taken her hand, nor did she look at him. Any indications derived from contact must be confined to suggestions—of course unintentional—of encouragement or discouragement, and no mere encouragement could, as far as yesterday's experiments were concerned, account for the success. The details are as follows:

I. *Subject.* Mrs. Toynbee (agent): 'Celia Newbolt under a gourd tree at Smyrna.' (Miss Celia

Newbolt is the daughter of Sir Henry Newbolt, the poet).

Professor Murray : ' Modern Greek of some kind—sort of Asia Minor place—a tree and woman sitting under it—a particular tree—girl sitting under it—she does not belong to the place—she is English—something to do with a poet—can't be Mrs. Kipling—no, it's a girl—rather like one of the Oliviers—(I don't think I can get her.' In this case the subject was imagined, not remembered.

II. *Subject.* Mrs. Toynbee (agent) : ' Mr. S—— playing Badminton at the Badminton Club at Bogota ; Lord Murray watching, and ladies watching, one with a fan.'

Professor Murray : ' This is something to do with your voyage to Panama—it's South America—it's people in white playing a game—it's your villain S——. He's playing a game—the word Bogota is coming to my mind—I think it is at a games-club.'

Mrs. Toynbee : ' What is the game ?'

Professor Murray : ' I think I am only guessing. I think the game is Badminton, and the Master of Elibank (Lord Murray) is there.' Here too the scene is purely imaginary.

Professor Murray then suggested that I should choose an incident and tell Mrs. Toynbee. But after he had left the room, at an unspoken suggestion, by sign, of Lady Mary Murray's, we decided to pursue the usual plan.

*Subject.* Mrs. Toynbee (agent) : ' I'll think of the Master of Trinity—(to me) your Master walking along the Backs and a gardener with a wheelbarrow sweeping up dead leaves and getting out of his way.'

Professor Murray : ' I don't think this is Mrs. Verrall's—it's the Master of Trinity walking in a garden—and a gardener sweeping leaves.'

Mrs. Toynbee : ' Any special place ? '

Professor Murray : ' The Backs. '

It was arranged that I should think of the next subject, and act directly as agent.

*Subject.* Mrs. Verrall (agent) : ' Jean Valjean walking in the dark wood and taking the handle of the pail from the little child (Cosette). '

Professor Murray : ' I had a faint impression of Silverlocks finding the bears' house in the wood. '

Even in this comparative failure there are two points of contact—the wood and the girl child. My subject was from Hugo's *Les Miserables*."

Mrs. Verrall made a statistical examination of all the experiments recorded during five years :—" The total number of recorded experiments is 505. On six occasions where the subject is noted there is no entry of a description, and these I count as Failures. So also I do ten cases where only the word ' Failure ' is noted. In sixty-eight cases no impression was obtained, and for statistical purposes these are, of course, also Failures ; though there is a great distinction, as regards our estimate of the phenomena, between a wrong guess and a failure to have any impression. These may be called Negative and the others Positive Failures. The whole number of Failures of every kind is 197, sixty-eight of these being due to absence of any impression. The number of Partial Successes is 141, and of Complete Successes 167. I have counted as Successes not only all cases where the complete incident is described, but also cases where what may be called the essential elements are given by the percipient, but of course opinions will differ as to what is essential." Mrs. Verrall then gives examples of Complete Successes, some of which have already

been noted; also of three Partial Successes, as follows:—

*Subject*: 'Miss Barbara Tchaikovsky visiting a political prisoner in the Peter and Paul prison.'

Professor Murray: 'Tchaikovsky, but I can't see what he's doing. No, I've got it blurred. I've got it mixed up with Miss Tchaikovsky. I've got her knocking at a front door.'

As the idea of prison, prisoner, is absent in the description, I have not counted this as a complete success.

*Subject*. 'Paul Sabatier walking with an alpenstock along a winding road in Savoy.'

Professor Murray: 'A man like Mr Irving going up a mountain—it isn't Mr. Irving—it's a clergyman with an alpenstock—I should say it was a foreign clergyman.'

Here again, since the name 'Paul Sabatier' and the locality 'Savoy' were not given, the success is counted only as *Partial*, though I think it will be admitted that the greater part of the desired impression was successfully transmitted.

*Subject*: 'Alister and Malcolm McDonald running along the platform at Liverpool Street, and trying to catch the train just going out.'

Professor Murray: 'Something to do with a railway station. I should say it was rather a crowd at a big railway station, and two little boys running along in the crowd. I should guess Basil.' Here again, though the picture of two little boys running in a railway station is correctly described, the name of the station is not given, and the boys are not identified. This therefore appears as *Partial*, and not as *Success*."

Mrs Verrall then discusses "whether the ordinary senses, if we *allow for special sensitiveness*, are the

agency for the transmission. The conditions of the experiment show clearly that the only sense we need consider is that of hearing." That is to say, though Professor Murray goes out of the room, and it is needless to say does not listen at the door, has he supernormal powers of hearing which enable him subconsciously to know what is said in a low voice inside the room?

In favour of this possibility it may be noted that when mistakes in names are made, the wrong name has occasionally a similarity in sound to the right one; as *Masefield* for *Mansfield*; *Mrs. Carr* for *Mrs. Carlyle*. But against this must be set instances where unspoken thoughts have been transmitted; and also cases where Professor Murray adds details unknown to himself, but known to Mrs Toynbee, though she has not mentioned them in giving the subject.

*Subject*: 'Belgian Baron getting out of a train at Savanarilla with us, and walking across the sandy track, and seeing the new train come in.'

Professor Murray: 'Man getting out of a train and looking for something. I don't know if he's looking for another train to come. I think it is a sort of dry hot sort of place. I get him with a faint impression of a waxed moustache—a sort of foreign person—but I can't get more.'

The Belgian Baron, never seen by Mr Murray, had a waxed moustache; but it had not been mentioned by Mrs Toynbee.

*Subject*. Mrs. Toynbee: 'I think of Mrs. F. sitting on the deck, and Grandfather opening the door for her.'

Professor Murray: 'This is Grandfather. I think it is on a ship, and I think he is bowing and smiling to somebody—opening a door.'

Mrs Toynbee : 'Can't you get the person?'

Professor Murray : 'I first thought of the Captain, and afterwards of a lady. I get a feeling of a pink head dress.' Mrs. Toynbee : 'That is right.'

*Subject.* Mrs. Toynbee : 'I think of that funny old Irishman called Dr. Hunt in the hotel at Jamaica. I'll think of the race where they wouldn't let him ride with his little gray mare.'

Professor Murray : 'Tropics. It's—it must have something to do with Jamaica. I can't get it a bit clear. I feel as if it were a drunken Irish doctor talking with a brogue. I can't get it clear.'

To this the contemporary note says that 'Mrs. Toynbee did not mention that he got drunk, but he did.'"

Mrs. Verrall remarks that Professor Murray is much more often successful when a member of his own family acts as agent, than when anyone else does so ; and continues, 'Various explanations may be offered for this fact, and among them must certainly be reckoned the mental attitude of the agent. The topics chosen by the members of his family have a vividness and actuality, a picturesqueness, a detail, and often an element of the fantastic which is lacking in the more sober selections made by visitors less acquainted perhaps with the conditions of previous success. For there is no doubt that the fantastic and the unusual specially lends itself to the successful guessing of Professor Murray, so that future experimenters should think of schoolmasters eating female crabs, of actual persons replacing fictitious characters, and perhaps especially of Russian novels rather than of actual incidents.'

Other 'guesses,' in varying degrees of success, are the following :—

*Subject*: 'Mr. B. with a dog in the front Quad at New College.'

Professor Murray: 'B. showing P. some old building in Rome—no, it's not in Rome, he's in the front Quad at New College, with something like a dancing bear.'

*Subject*: 'Miss L. dragging her little dog up the hill at Alassio in the heat.'

Professor Murray: 'I get the impression of people on the Riviera going up a hill. Is a dog in it?' ('Yes') 'Road towards the gap at Alassio.'

*Subject*: 'Mr. H. throwing stones into a pond on Hampstead Heath.'

Professor Murray: 'Not Denis and me throwing stones at a notice board? Faint impression of throwing stones.'

*Subject*: 'Mr. L. beating an egg at Siena.'

Professor Murray: 'Kangaroos.'

(One person present had been thinking that if she were choosing a subject she would give something like a kangaroo or a bear with a visiting book like the picture in *Punch*. Professor Murray said he had sheep, bears and kangaroos in his mind.)

*Subject*: 'Sir Henry Lunn at the North Pole.'

Professor Murray: 'Is it anything to do with the poll at an election? A vague impression of a crowd waiting at the North Pole.'

*Subject*: 'Mr. B. pulling a tin bath at the top of a staircase.'

Professor Murray: 'This is Harold B. I thought he was looking in at a shop window, but now I can only get tin pans.'

*Subject*: 'I shall think of the third S. brother eating sponge cake, and talking to the other S's grey dog.'

Professor Murray: 'This *smells* to me like



Birmingham. It's the S. family—not Ernest. I rather think it's Hugh, but there are other S.'s about, and Hugh's eating something—a sort of afternoon tea. It's not Hugh, it's another one I don't know. It's either Hugh or one I don't know.'

*Subject*:—'Mrs. X. driving in a taximeter towards Notre Dame and shouting to the cabman to stop, and he's deaf and doesn't hear.'

Professor Murray: 'This is something French—Paris. I get an impression of Notre Dame and somebody driving towards it and the car stopping or something—it's not clear, but I get Notre Dame. A rich stoutish elderly woman with rather a manner.' (This description applies to Mrs X.)"

No other telepathic experiments have yet reached as high a measure of success as those of Professor Murray and his family; but it must be borne in mind that they were conducted under the most favourable conditions; the complete sympathy between agent and percipient being no doubt the principal factor towards success. But another point to be noted is that both agent and percipient were in a perfectly familiar environment, without any element of strangeness or elaborate preparation.

Another series of experiments, principally between Miss Verrall, (now Mrs. Salter), and Miss L. Tipping, was made during 1913 and 1914, under strictly supervised conditions, in the rooms of the S.P.R. At the commencement of these experiments Miss Verrall (agent) and Miss Tipping (percipient) were not acquainted: after the experiments had been going on some weeks they met once and had five minutes' conversation, but did not meet again during the period covered by the experiments. Miss Verrall sat in one room under the supervision of

Miss Newton, Secretary to S.P.R. : Miss Tipping sat in another room under the supervision of Miss Johnson, Research Officer; the two rooms being separated by a passage about 30 feet in length.

Though this supervision was necessary to prevent any possibility of the accusation of collusion and fraud being made; still it created an environment which was to some extent strained and unnatural, which must have militated against complete success. Nevertheless, in a great many instances Miss Tipping did get dim, and occasionally clear, intuitions as to what Miss Verrall was doing in the other room. Full particulars are to be found in S.P.R. *Proceedings*, Vol. XXVII. ; I will give one example here.

Miss Verrall was concentrating her mind on making crochet lace, and found it necessary to count the stitches. Just before the experiment commenced the casual thought had gone through her mind that she would buy some cherries for dessert on her way home.

Miss Tipping, sitting in the other room wrote down what ideas came to her, addressing herself to Miss Verrall, as follows:—"I have an impression of white flowers, lots of little bits of white, very soft in texture. You seem to move these fallen white things about, at least your fingers seem very busy. Then I see red colours, and small rounds this time, like this (she drew six cherries with stalks), I want to eat cherries. I keep wishing to taste fruit. Your hands seem to move about much. It's so queer, but I do want to *count* the things you are touching."

Though this is not an exact description of Miss Verrall's employment, the points of similarity, particularly the desire to *count* which evidently puzzled Miss Tipping, can hardly be the result of chance coincidence. It is I think especially inter-

esting that the passing thought of cherries should have been transmitted with greater distinctness than the idea of crochet lace which Miss Verrall intended to transmit.

The following experiments in thought-transference were conducted by Dr. S., a well-known physician of San Francisco, and his wife. Dr. S. thus describes the circumstances:—"I came to try the experiment this way: I read of a certain drummer who, when absent from home, made it a practice to sit at ten o'clock p.m., for about half an hour, his wife the same, and mentally communicate the news of the day to each other. . . As my wife was to go away from San Francisco last summer with a sick sister of hers, we decided to try the experiment. My wife has grown up in an atmosphere of scepticism, consequently she did not give the subject as much attention as I did, otherwise we might have had better results. . . We agreed to sit twenty minutes at ten o'clock p.m. In sending news, I fixed my mind strongly on the message: in receiving I made my mind as nearly blank as I could, excluding all thought. Everything I received came to me as a mental picture. Sometimes I would see things only partly, like half of a face. When I saw her arm with the poison oak, it came very clearly. I almost thought I could speak to her, but I never heard anything like noise."

May 12th. Transmitted      May 12th. Received.  
Mrs. S.

Arrived safely. Pleasant trip. B. feels fairly well. We have a nice place in an old-fashioned house.

Had a good trip. B. slept well. House squarely built and plain; porch surrounded by trees; not fronting the road; rooms

very sunny. (All accurate. What follows was seen clairvoyantly apparently. ED.) Landlady wears sunbonnet with jacket of same. Little boy three years old. (Boy expected, but did not arrive till next day.) Fire in north east. (Fire occurred next night).

May 13th. Trans. Dr. S. Theresa B. and her mother were here yesterday. Also Clare and Emma. Business somewhat dull. W's house burned yesterday.

May 14th. Tran. Dr. S. Nothing sent.

May 15th. Trans. Dr. S. E. and R. went to park. Mrs. A. is angry. S. paid his bill.

May 16th. Trans. Mrs. S. Paid a visit to K.'s. B. feels quite well.

May 13th. Received. I think Theresa B. was there or is coming. Something, I can't make out, about business. I think it is bad.

May 14th. Forgot to keep the appointed time.

May 15th. Received. Could get nothing definite; think you collected some money.

May 16th. Received. You took a long walk. I see a young man with a revolver in his hand. (A young man shot a dog in the garden that day.)

## TELEPATHY

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<p>May 17th. Trans. Dr. S. Nothing sent; business prevented.</p>	<p>May 17th. Received. Could get nothing at all. Think you were out.</p>
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<p>May 18th. Trans. Mrs. S. B. does not feel well at all. Went for medicine.</p>	<p>May 18th. See a lot of wine casks and demi-johns. Something about curtains. (Mrs. S. visited a large wine cellar on the 17th. The curtains in her room annoyed her very much. But nothing about either was consciously sent.)</p>
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<p>May 19th. Trans. Dr. S. Case of D. will come off in the courts 29th. Business still quiet. Played whist.</p>	<p>May 19th. Received. Think you had rain. You seem dissatisfied. You are telling me something about D., I am sure. (It did rain, but the fact was not consciously sent.)</p>
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<p>May 20th. Trans. Mrs. S. My clothes and shoes are all torn. I have poison oak on my arms. Hope it will not be bad.</p>	<p>May 20th. Received. You went out riding. I see you holding a shoe in your hand. You have poison oak on your right arm. B. is better. You want me to mail you the <i>Bulletin</i> and the <i>Chronicle</i>. (Mrs. S. did ride out. Poison oak was on right arm only. B. gained</p>
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three pounds. She was hoping for the *Bulletin* supplement only.)

May 21st.

Appointment forgotten.

May 21st.

Not at home; did not sit to receive.

May 22nd. Trans. Mrs. S. Visited Springs. Very warm all day. I have a sick headache.

May 22nd. Received.

It must be warm; I see you fanning yourself, you were riding; on a donkey I think. (She rode in a carriage but saw a donkey on her trip which amused her very much.)

May 23rd. Trans. Dr. S.

Up all night. Very tired. Nothing new.

May 23rd. Received.

You are looking very cross and tired.

It would be easy to fill a folio volume with well-attested incidents, of which the most reasonable explanation is that they were caused by telepathy. Mr. Podmore summed up the matter as follows:—“Separately, no doubt, each particular case is susceptible of more or less adequate explanation by some well known cause; and in the last resort it would be unreasonable to stake the credit of any single witness, however eminent, against what Hume would call the uniform experience of mankind. But as a matter of fact the experience of mankind is not uniform in this matter; and when we are forced by the mere accumulation of testimony to go on adding one strained and inadequate explanation to another, and to assume at last an epidemic of mis-

representation, perhaps even an organised conspiracy of falsehood, a point is at length reached in which the sum of improbabilities involved in the negation of thought-transference must outweigh the single improbability of a new mode of mental action." Mr. Podmore also quotes Professor C. Lloyd Morgan as having said that the evidence against telepathy "can only be rejected as a whole, by one who is prepared to repeat at his leisure, what David is reported to have said in his haste."

As we shall find throughout this book, telepathy, whether from the living or from the departed, plays a very important part in all other supernormal phenomena.

Mr. Myers wrote (*Proceedings* VI.):—"I regard telepathy, not as a fact standing alone and self-sufficing, but as a first hint of discoveries which cannot be circumscribed,—a casually reached indication of some unknown scheme of things of which thought-transference, clairvoyance, apparitions at death, may be but subordinate effects, or incidental examples."

## CHAPTER II

### CLAIRVOYANCE

“THE word clairvoyance is often used very loosely and with widely different meanings. In the present paper I intend to denote by it a faculty of acquiring supernormally, but not by reading the minds of persons present, a knowledge of facts such as we normally acquire by the use of our senses. I do not limit it, notwithstanding the derivation of the word, to knowledge which would normally be acquired by the sense of sight, nor do I limit it to a knowledge of present facts. A similar knowledge of past and, if necessary, of future facts may be included.

One class of cases—often called clairvoyant by old writers—we shall exclude, namely, those in which the knowledge exhibited by the percipient is already in the mind of some person present. Experiment has proved that percipients will seem to themselves to see independently scenes which have no existence except in the mind of a person present, so that the impression if supernormal at all, must be due to thought-transference. A good instance of this is given in *Phantasms of the Living* (Vol. 1, p. 96), where Mrs. W., hypnotised by Mr. G. A. Smith, and describing apparently clairvoyantly, a room unknown to her but known to Mr. Smith, described on the



table an open umbrella which had no existence except in Mr. Smith's imagination. . . . But though the evidential reason for dividing off these cases from clairvoyance proper is clear, I am not prepared to say that the line so drawn has much scientific value. It is undeniable that such evidence as we have of clairvoyant perception of things at a distance is often very much mixed up with evidence of similar perceptions possibly due to thought-transference from persons present, and this suggests the possibility that clairvoyant perception of distant scenes is facilitated when it can be led up to by thought-transference from those present. . . . It is very doubtful whether, by any definition that could be framed, we could mark off a class of phenomena having any common explanation peculiar to themselves."

The above is taken from Mrs. Henry Sidgwick's article on the "Evidence for Clairvoyance," *S.P.R. Pro. VII.*, and in the same article she also remarks:—"Experience seems to show that clairvoyants are often—generally perhaps—unable to distinguish true impressions from false ones. The scenes they seem to themselves to visit may be the work of their own imagination, or the verbal or mental suggestion of others, or may be veridical, without the clairvoyant perceiving any difference."

The following case, though it is bare of the picturesque details some others afford, is I think of considerable value, as it is more or less vouched for as authentic by the report of a coroner's inquest.

A newspaper published April 18, 1903, contained the following announcement:—"Two men lost their lives in the Severn at Bewdley on March 22, and it was not until Wednesday that the first body—that of Stephen Price—was found. At the inquest yesterday afternoon at Stourport, Thomas Butler, who found

the body, said it was owing to a dream the night before that he visited the spot where he found the body. It was six miles from the scene of the fatality. A verdict of 'Accidentally drowned' was returned, the coroner remarking on the curious circumstance of the dream."

At the request of the S.P.R. Colonel G. L. Le M. Taylor undertook to investigate the matter; he found that Price had been seen to fall into the river, but the current was very strong, and the body had been carried out of sight before any attempt at rescue could be made. The Kidderminster local papers contained the following details of what transpired at the inquest.

"Thomas Butler, of Beel-row, Stourport, labourer, said on Wednesday morning he went towards Shrawley Wood. On the previous evening he dreamt that he saw the body of a man on the top side of the Lincombe Weir. He went for a walk with a man, and told him that he had had the dream. They went round Shrawley Wood and returned by Hampstall Hotel, and when just below Lincombe Weir he saw the body of a man in the water in the Weir cutting. He got a boat and called to John Oakley, clerk at the Lincombe Lock, who said that a policeman was at the lockhouse. Witness rowed the boat across the river, picked up P.C. Meaks, and took him to the spot where the body was. They put the body into the boat, and it was conveyed to the mortuary.

"The Coroner: Are you in the habit of having these realistic dreams?"

"Witness: No, sir.

"The Coroner: You might be a useful man if you were.

"Witness: Very likely, sir."

Colonel Taylor talked with several people who had personal knowledge of the circumstances ; and was told by one of them that the place where the body was found was, in his opinion, a most unlikely place for it to be. This seemed to preclude the probability of Butler having made merely a lucky guess. The landlord of the hotel which was Butler's 'house of call,' on being asked if Butler had related his dream before the finding of the body, replied, 'Oh, yes, he told me and several people in the morning before he found it, and declared his intention of looking about Lincombe on account of it.' It appeared however, that in his dream Butler had seen the body caught in a bush below Lincombe Weir ; whereas it was found caught in a bush above the Weir."

I give the next case as summarized in the S.P.R. *Journal* as follows :—

The second Part of the *Proceedings* of the American Society for Psychical Research contains an article by Professor William James discussing a striking case of clairvoyance reported to him by Dr. Harris Kennedy, a cousin of Mrs. James. The case occurred in 1898 and accounts were obtained within a few days of the occurrence, (but for some reason that does not appear, were not published till nine years later). They relate to the finding of the body of a drowned girl through impressions received in trance by a certain Mrs. Titus, a non-professional medium. The girl had disappeared from her home early on Monday morning, Oct. 31, 1898, having been last seen by a few people in the street leading to a bridge across a lake, and by one person on the bridge. Some 150 men were hunting for her in the woods and on the lake shore all that day, and during the next two days a diver searched the lake in vain for her body. Mrs. Titus lived in a village about four

and a half miles from the home of the girl, whom she did not know, though her husband worked in the same mill with the girl's sister. On the Sunday she told her husband that something awful was going to happen, and on Monday, just as he was leaving for the mill she said it had happened. At noon he told her that the sister had gone home—it was imagined because her mother was ill; in the evening they heard that the girl was missing, and on Tuesday, Mrs. Titus talked about it and said she was in the lake, which was of course a natural guess to make.

On Wednesday evening Mrs. Titus became entranced, and on being wakened by her husband said if he had let her alone she could have discovered by the morning where the girl was. That night she had two more trances, during which she told her husband that she saw the girl standing on a frost-covered log on the bridge, that her foot slipped and she fell backwards into the water, and that she was lying in a certain place by the bridge, head downwards between two logs, the body covered with mud and brush; and one foot projecting with a new rubber shoe on. A curious point reported by Mr. Titus was, that when questioned about the girl she would answer, but apparently she did not hear him when he spoke to her of other things.

In the morning Mr. Titus told his wife's experience to a friend of his, and to the foreman of the mill where he worked, (both of whom confirmed the account fully), and obtained leave from the latter to take his wife to the lake. After going to the bridge and identifying the place seen in her vision, Mrs. Titus went with her husband to the house of a mill-owner, Mr. Whitney, who had mainly organised the search for the body, and employed the diver. They told their story and persuaded Mr.

Whitney to return to the bridge with them, and order the diver to go down at the point indicated by Mrs. Titus. He did so and found the body just in the place, and position, described. The testimony of the diver, which as well as that of Mr. Whitney, is given in full detail, shows that the body was found at a depth of about eighteen feet in the water; that the water was so dark that no one could see into it; and that he himself could see nothing when in the water, but found the body entirely by feeling.

The evidence for the facts of this case is unusually full and strong; as to their supernormal character, the main question would seem to be how much information existed in the neighbourhood about the girl's doings, which might have furnished the material for Mrs. Titus's trance-impressions. It seems that there was a light frost that morning, and that the girl's footprints were traced on to the bridge and up to a distance unrecorded upon it. This was known to all the town; but that no definite clue was really afforded by these footprints was shown by the fact that the searchers who knew of them were nevertheless hunting the woods as well as the lake side, while the diver had searched along both sides of the bridge. There was every reason to believe that Mrs. Titus had not been to the place since the accident, nor for two or three years previously, so that it is difficult to suppose she could have had any normal means of forming a judgment as to the whereabouts of the body."

A third case, which is again concerned with death by drowning, differs materially from the preceding; the event taking place in Australia and the dreamer being in England. A letter from Mrs. Green, the percipient, to Miss Richardson, describing her experience, was forwarded with other matter to the S.P.R.

“Newry, 21st. First month, 1885.

Dear Friend,—In compliance with thy request, I give thee the particulars of my dream. I saw two respectably-dressed females driving along in a vehicle like a mineral water cart. Their horse stopped at a water to drink, but as there was no footing, he lost his balance, and in trying to recover it he plunged right in. With the shock, the women stood up and shouted for help, and their hats rose off their heads, and as they were going down I turned away crying, and saying, ‘Was there no one at all to help them?’ Upon which I awoke, and my husband asked me what was the matter. I related the above dream to him, and he asked me if I knew them. I said I did not, and thought I had never seen any of them. The impression of the dream and the trouble it brought me, was over me all day. I remarked to my son it was the anniversary of his birthday and my own also—the 10th of the First month, and this is why I remember the date.

· The following Third month I got a letter and a newspaper from my brother in Australia, named Allen, letting me know the sad trouble which had befallen him in the loss, by drowning, of one of his daughters and her companion. Thou wilt see by the description given of it in the paper how the event corresponded with my dream. My niece was born in Australia, and I never saw her. Please return the paper at thy convenience. Considering that our night is their day, I must have been in sympathy with the sufferers at the time of the accident, on the 10th of First Month, 1878.”

Extract from *The Inglewood Advertiser*, Friday evening, January, 11, 1878. “A dreadful accident occurred in the neighbourhood of Wedderburn, on

Wednesday last, resulting in the death of two women, named Lehey and Allen. It appears that the deceased were driving into Wedderburn in a spring cart from the direction of Kinypaniel, when they attempted to water their horse at a dam on the boundary of Torpichen Station. The dam was ten or twelve feet deep in one spot, and into this deep hole they must have inadvertently driven, for Mr. W. McKechnie, manager of Torpichen Station, upon going to the dam some hours afterwards, discovered the spring cart and horse under the water, and two women's hats floating on the surface. The dam was searched, and the bodies of the two women, clasped in each others' arms, recovered."

Extract from evidence given at inquest. . . Joseph John Allen, farmer, deposed: I identify one of the bodies as that of my sister. I saw her about 11 a.m. yesterday . . . The horse had broken away and I caught it for her. Mrs. Lehey and my sister met me when I caught the horse . . . They then took the horse and went to Mr. Clark's. I did not see them afterwards alive.

William McKechnie deposed: . . . About 4 p.m. yesterday, I was riding by the dam when I observed the legs of a horse and the chest above water.

From Mr. Green, Newry. 15th Second Month, 1885.

Dear Friend Edith Richardson.—In reference to the dream that my wife had of seeing two young women thrown out of a spring cart, by their horse stopping to drink out of some deep water, I remember she was greatly distressed about it, and seemed to feel great sympathy with them. It occurred on the night of the 9th of January. The reason I can

remember the date so well is that the 10th was the anniversary of my wife's and our son's birthday. As the day advanced she seemed to get worse, and I advised her to go out for a drive; when she returned she told me she was no better, and also said she had told the driver not to go near water, lest some accident should befall, as she had had such a dreadful dream the night before, at the same time telling him the nature of it. As my wife's niece did not live with her father, he was not told of it until the next morning, which would be our evening of the 10th and which we think accounted for the increased trouble she felt in sympathy with him. Thos. Green."

In the following case which is in my judgment too important to be omitted, a paid medium takes a leading part. I have, however, included it because, as will appear from the narrative, all possibility of fraud on the part of the medium seems excluded.

Writing on March 23, 1891, Mrs. Davis stated that in March 1864 she was living at Natick, about 17 miles from Boston, U.S.A.; and had as a neighbour a Mrs. Critcherson, who had several children, two being by a former deceased husband: these boys were Willie Mason, aged 15, and Joshua Mason aged 11. The elder boy was employed at some Stores at Boston; and one Friday afternoon returned home to see his mother; as she was away, he and his younger brother went out together. The boys did not return, and though inquiries were made nothing could be heard of them. Mrs. Critcherson seems from the first to have had a strong impression that her boys were in the lake; but no one else thought this at all probable, as they had not been seen near the lake, and in March there was nothing



to attract boys to the water. However, to satisfy the mother, cannon were fired near the lake on the Saturday, with a view to bringing the bodies to the surface; and a Mr. Andrew Clark agreed to go to Boston on the Monday to get grappling irons to drag the lake more thoroughly. But most people still believed that the boys had gone off on a spree somewhere, and would no doubt soon return.

Mrs. Davis went to see Mrs. Critcherson about 9 a.m. on the Monday morning, and offered her services. Mrs. Critcherson said that only one thing remained to be done, and that was for someone to go to Boston and consult a clairvoyant: and continued, 'Mrs. Davis, you are the one I want to go.' Mrs. Davis objected that she 'had never visited a clairvoyant or consulted one, and did not know where to go, and how to turn.' However, not feeling able to refuse the grief-stricken mother, she finally consented to do as requested, though she 'had no faith that anything would come of this visit to Boston.' On the same train going in was Mr. Andrew Clark, who was going to get the grappling irons: (he returned at 2 p.m., and the lake was dragged, but without result.)

Mrs. Davis continued:— "I arrived in Boston at 12 o'clock. I went, as I had been told, to the *Banner of Light* office, and asked, as a stranger, if they could direct me to some reliable clairvoyant. They directed me to one on, or near, Court Street. I found the woman engaged. The gentleman who answered the bell-pull directed me to a clairvoyant on Dix-place. When I arrived at Dix-place I found this woman also engaged, but she directed me to a Mrs. York on Washington street, near Common street. It was about three o'clock. A sitter was leaving as I rang the bell. Mrs. York opened the

door herself. When I told her my errand, she told me she could not see me till the next day ; but on my saying the next day would be too late, she told me to walk into her parlour, and she would go out and take a walk, and on her return would see me. These were the only words she addressed to me, and I am sure she knew nothing of me whatever, where I came from, or what my errand was about. . . .

“Mrs. York was gone about fifteen minutes ; then she came into the room, and going to the fireplace at once, and with her back to me, and without my speaking one word, she said, ‘They went East, before they went West.’ (The rail-road station is east from the house in which their mother lived, and the lake west.) She then said, ‘They saw the fire, and so went to the water.’ (It was afterwards found out that on the day, Friday afternoon, some men were burning brush near the lake ; and that was what attracted the boys up there.) She then went on to describe a boat-house, with a hole in the side of the boathouse. She then said, ‘They went in through this hole in the side.’ She described a boat, which she said was ‘a narrow boat, painted black,’ and said, ‘Oh dear, it was never intended that but one person should get into it at a time.’ She told of their pulling out a little way, the younger brother falling into the water first, and the older brother trying to save him, and also said, ‘The place where they are is muddy, and they could not come to the surface.’ ‘Why,’ said she, ‘it is not the main lake they are in, but the shallow point which connects the main lake, and they are so near the shore that if it was not this time of year you could almost walk in and pick them up.’ She told of the citizens’ interest in trying to find them, and said, ‘They will not find them, they go too far from the shore ; they are on the

left of the boat-house, a few feet from land.' Then I said 'If they are in the water they will be found before I can reach home.' She said, 'No, they will not be found before you get there; you will have to go and tell them where they are, and then they will be found *within five minutes after you reach the lake.*' She made me promise to go with them to the lake. She said, 'They are very near together; after finding one, you will quickly find the other.'—I reached Natick at five o'clock. There was a crowd at the station. When I got out on to the platform, some gentleman said to me 'Mrs. Davis, what did the clairvoyant tell you?' I answered, 'Haven't you found them yet?' They said no, and then I told them what Mrs. York had said, and went with them to the lake. In looking into the boathouse it was found that the *long narrow boat*,—painted as she had said *all in black*, was missing; this boat as she had said was to hold only one man, and was unsafe occupied by two persons. (I did not know at the time of my sitting with Mrs. York that Mr. Benning Hall was the owner of such a boat, or that the boat-house was used to shelter a boat of this description. I had never seen such a boat; so this part did not reach her through my mind.) And this boat was found in a cove, some distance from the boathouse, a few days after. Neither did I know of the 'hole' in the boathouse until I reached the lake that afternoon. Finding that what she said of the boat and the hole in the boathouse was true, I began to think the rest might be true also; but no one in the crowd, so far as I know, did place any confidence in her statement. I stood on the shore and two boats put off with men holding grappling irons. I was able to tell them how to direct their course. Three or four strokes of the oars, and the elder brother of the boys

who were missing, and who was holding one of the grappling irons, exclaimed 'I have hold of something.' The men stopped rowing, and he raised the body of the largest boy above the water. In taking the body into the boat, the boat moved a few lengths. They were told to go to the same place where the eldest had been found, and almost immediately brought up the other body. It was not ten minutes after reaching the lake that the boys were found, and were being taken to their home. As Mrs. York had said they were in a muddy place; their clothes testified to the fact.

The disappearance of the boys in the manner I have described is known by fifty persons now living in Natick. I cannot say how much larger the number is.

Mrs. York had, while in this trance, by using books on the table, showed me the boathouse and the shore so well, that any one from the description could have gone directly to the water and found them. I asked her how she came by this information. She answered, 'The boys' father told me.' How did she know the boys' father had been dead several years?

Elizabeth Everett Davis."

Ten people readily confirmed, from personal knowledge, every detail of Mrs. Davis's statement; this number included the mother, step-father, and the brother of the drowned boys; and Mr. Andrew Clark, who had fetched the grappling irons from Boston."

It will be noted that the four cases recounted above, have one element in common; in every instance death is caused by drowning. In looking through the *Proceedings* and *Journal* of the S.P.R.

I have been struck by the large number of instances of apparitions of drowned persons. It would I think be interesting if these could be tabulated and compared with the number of apparitions at the time of, or after other forms of sudden and violent death. My impression is that the proportion of the former would be large. In this connexion it may be of interest to note that there is at least a popular belief that in the act of drowning events of the past life are realised with extreme vividness and detail. Though there is evidence that this is not universally true, still it has undoubtedly occurred in a good many instances; and it may perhaps be deduced that immersion in water does sometimes induce a state in which the victim receives super-normal impressions, and may conceivably convey them to others.

The following cases are taken from Mrs. Sidgwick's article, *Pro.* VII.

Of the clairvoyant, the wife of a pitman in the county of Durham, whom we will call 'Jane,' Mr. Myers, who collected the evidence wrote:—"She has never received any fee, nor made any exhibition of her powers. On the contrary, she has most carefully concealed her faculty from all her neighbours and relations, except her husband and sister, for fear of being taken for a witch. The witnesses of her clairvoyance have consequently been few, consisting mainly of a family in whose service one or two of her relations had been. We have the testimony of three members of this family, viz., the Rev. C. Green and his two sisters, who are now Mrs. Fraser and Mrs. Myers (wife of — a cousin of my own), We have also the notes of a Dr. F. Singularly enough, it appears that none of these witnesses, with the exception of Dr. F., at all realised the rarity of Jane's faculty. She was mesmerised at intervals through a

long period of years—for the sake of her health, by the arrangement of her medical attendant, with a view to enabling her to sleep at night. And when in the mesmeric state she almost always began to talk in a childish language, and to ask to ‘travel,’ that is, to be guided by suggestion to places which she could clairvoyantly visit. This was done accordingly, partly to oblige her, and partly as an amusement; and whenever her reports of her ‘travels’ could be verified we are told they were found to be correct. But as Jane in her normal state shrank from all mention of these clairvoyant wanderings, very little was said about them. There was thus an entire absence of the motives which may often prompt to the simulation of clairvoyance.”

Mrs. Thomas Myers wrote that in the year 1845, Jane was taken (clairvoyantly), to visit my cousins. She said the eldest had measles, and then noticed a cradle with a baby in it, rocking rapidly without anyone near it. This was thought very strange by the operator, (i. e. the mesmeriser), but on writing to tell the cousins of the visit they said she was quite correct, as the baby used to rock himself with his elbows. In 1871 I took her (mentally) to a cousin’s house in Clifton, sister of the ‘Baby Willie,’ and as she went into the house she read ‘salve’ on the tiles before the glass door; then entering the Hall she exclaimed, ‘Here is a gentleman. It is *Baby Willie!* Baby Willie grown a big man.” She had never seen him since she saw him in that cradle. I was not aware he was in Clifton at that time, but found on writing to inquire that he had gone for a few days to see his sister. . . . Jane was taken by my sister Miss Green, I being present, and a Miss A. A., a friend, to “see” her (Miss A. A.’s) great aunt, who was ill, but refused to let a doctor examine her. Miss A. A.’s mother

had gone to nurse her in a town far away from where we were, and Jane knew nothing of any of the parties nor did we. She entered the house and immediately exclaimed 'Oh, for shame! Oh, for shame! Two bottles and a cup! Look in the closet: two bottles and a cup! She fell downstairs and has broken her leg: she does not wish it known.' Miss A. at once wrote to her mother, who looked in the cupboard and found two *empty* bottles and a cup! The doctor examined the leg, *it was broken*. No previous suspicion pointed to this sad discovery."

We are also told of Jane that "in a very uncomfortable manner for polite operators, she reads the minds and thoughts of those she is called to look at, and one day when looking at a man, (fortunately not in the room), she said, 'We do not like him, his heart is as black as his hat.'

Dr. F. wrote giving many instances, which on the whole seem to indicate that Jane's 'travelling' experiences were genuine clairvoyance, and not merely the result of thought-transference. One of these, uninteresting, but evidential, may be given. Dr. F. said:—"I was not present myself, the clairvoyant being mesmerised by Mrs. Fraser. I was visiting a lady professionally—and mentioned the subject of clairvoyance, stating that I would 'pay her a visit in the spirit.' I met Mrs. Fraser, who said, 'Who is the lady to whom you have promised a visit?' She then stated that whilst in the mesmeric state, Jane was requested to find me, which she did, stating that I was in a room with a lady, to whom I was addressing the words I have before used." Jane subsequently gave a detailed description of the room Dr. F. had been in, with absolute accuracy, though Mrs. Fraser was not in the slightest degree acquainted with the house or the lady.

Other interesting cases of apparent clairvoyance were reported by Mr. A. W. Dobbie, of Adelaide, South Australia, in 1886. Mr. Dobbie had practised hypnotism for ten or twelve years, and hypnotised more than 500 persons, chiefly with the view of alleviating suffering; and found that a few of these appeared to be clairvoyant. Two percipients, or clairvoyants, were the Misses Eliza and Martha Dixon, the former being the more lucid of the two. These ladies had a large school for young children. They very frequently assisted Mr. Dobbie in his experiments, but had no pecuniary interest in them whatever. Two instances of the Misses Dixon's powers may be given, abbreviated from the original reports by Mr. Dobbie who wrote:—"The Hon. Dr. Campbell, M.L.C., being present at one of my clairvoyant evenings, handed me a gold sleeve-link, at the same time telling me that he had lost the fellow one to it; he asked me to give the remaining link to one of my clairvoyants, and see if they could find the missing one. I should state that neither of the clairvoyants had ever seen either of the rooms they referred to, nor did they know the names of the children; so that it is either a case of genuine clairvoyance, or else a most remarkable case of thought-reading."

Miss Martha Dixon began by first accurately describing Dr. Campbell's features, then spoke of a little fair-haired boy who had a stud or sleeve-link in his hand, also of a lady calling him 'Neil;' then said that this little boy had taken the link into a place like a nursery where there were some toys, especially a large toy elephant, and that he had dropped the link into this elephant through a hole which had been torn or knocked in the breast. Also that he had taken it out again, and gave two or three other interesting particulars. Subsequently, the other



sister, Miss Eliza Dixon, described how Dr. Campbell had left the link on the table of his dressing-room, which she described in minute detail; and the little boy had taken it. Then, (Dr. Campbell being no longer in the room), she continued:—"Now I can hear someone calling up the stairs, a lady is calling two names, Colin is one, and Neil is the other. The eldest, Colin, is going downstairs now, he is gone into what looks like a dining-room, the lady says, 'Where is Neil?' 'Upstairs, ma.' 'Go and tell him to come down at once.' The little fairhaired boy had put the link down; but when he heard his brother coming up, he picked it up again. Colin says, 'Neil, you are to come down at once.' 'I won't,' says Neil. 'You're a goose,' replies Colin, and he turned and went down without Neil. Now Neil has gone into the nursery and put the link into a large toy elephant; he put it through a hole in front, which is broken." The clairvoyant then described in detail how Dr. Campbell searched for the link; then went on, "Now it seems to be another day and the little boy is in the nursery again, he has taken the link out of the elephant, now he has dropped it into a drawer." The link had in fact been found in a drawer in the dressing-room in the interval, but left untouched. Miss Dixon said, "There is a double-sized dressing-table with drawers down each side of it, the sleeve link is in the corner of the drawer nearest the door. When they found it they left it there. I know why they left it there, it was to see if we could find it."

Dr. Campbell wrote:—"I had no knowledge whatever of the conversation between the children, nor the circumstances attending it. It was subsequently confirmed to me in part by Mrs. Campbell, such part as she herself is reported to have taken in the tableau. With respect to the toy elephant, I certainly knew of

ts existence, but I did not know even by suspicion that the elephant was so mutilated as to have a large opening in its chest, and on coming home had to examine the toy to see whether the statement was correct. I need hardly say that it was absolutely correct."

Mrs. Sidgwick, commenting on the above, remarks that the greater part might have been obtained by thought-transference from the mind of Dr. Campbell but that the mention of the toy elephant, being unknown to Dr. Campbell, is so remarkable, that it makes it seem more probable than not, that the hiding of the sleeve link there was also a fact.

Another case is given by Dr. Dobbie:—"One evening, whilst I was busy with several of my clairvoyants, Mr. Adamson, J.P. (one of the leading citizens of Adelaide), called in company with his daughter, and handing me two or three trinkets which had been suspended to her watch-chain, simply remarked, 'We have lost something. Will you kindly see if your clairvoyant can help us in the matter?' My clairvoyants all being asleep, I quietly placed the trinkets in the hand of the one called Miss E. Dixon, without remark. In a moment or two she proceeded to give an accurate description of Miss Adamson. I then said, 'Never mind the young lady, something is lost, try and find it.'

In a few moments she commenced to describe a gold pencil-case which she saw 'lying on the road in one of the suburbs, not in the city, it is not there now, it is in a comfortable-looking one-storey house, with a garden, and iron railings in front; and a two-storey building opposite.' She then described the gentleman who had possession of the pencil-case, whom she saw with his wife, and also quoted a remark he made, "We will lay it aside and see if

anyone claims it," and stated that it was placed 'in a small box.' My clairvoyant seemed unable to give me the locality of this gentleman and his house; however, in reply to an advertisement next day or day after, a gentleman answering the description given by my clairvoyant brought the lost pencil-case to Mr. Adamson, who naturally enough, was so astounded at the correct description of a person none of us had ever seen or known, that he took the tram and visited the neighbourhood and house in which the gentleman resided, and to his astonishment he found that the description was exact, in fact it was the only house in the neighbourhood having iron railings, also that there actually was a two-storey house opposite, which was also the only one in the neighbourhood. Mr. Adamson, on questioning the gentleman, found that the pencil-case was found on the road described; also that it had been placed in the small box and the remark made *re* waiting to 'see if it would be claimed.'

Dr. Adamson wrote, fully confirming the above in every particular, and adding the additional fact that the] clairvoyant had subsequently "followed the finder of the pencil case to Adelaide, seeing him go upstairs to my son's office, and there give up the pencil-case. Of this, as of all former knowledge of the article in question, she must have been in total ignorance."

The next case is taken from the *S.P.R. Journal*: the writer, (whose name and address are given in the *Journal*), stated:—

In the autumn of 1874, when at Berlin, I was most anxious to know what was happening in a remote part of the North of Scotland.

Accidentally I heard of a middle-aged woman, Frau Meyer, the wife of a bookbinder, living in an obscure

part of that capital in very modest circumstances, who had a marvellous talent for acquainting one with what was going on at a distance, as also, to a certain extent, of foretelling the future. I called upon her, and such was her position, she being uneducated and quite of an inferior class of life, that at that time (my knowledge of the language being sufficiently fluent for it to have been almost impossible for her to have even recognised me as a foreigner, much less to identify my actual nationality) she could not possibly have guessed who I was.

The process she employed was to pour the white of a raw egg into a tumbler of cold water, and then to describe the meaning of the fantastic forms assumed by the egg.

In the first instance she actually described to me the age and personal appearance of the individual in whom I was interested; his surroundings and the house in which he lived. . . The country also I fully recognised from her description.

After explaining, as was proved later to be most correct, his *then* temperament and feelings, she told me she saw him start on a long journey to a large capital (London).

At a visit I paid her immediately afterwards she clearly described to me a room she saw him in at a hotel, and a stormy interview he had with another man, refusing at first to see certain papers, but eventually consenting; also his sudden return to the North. I subsequently ascertained the absolute accuracy of all that she told me, both as to date, interviews, etc. When describing the interview she asserted it had taken place the previous evening, which proved to be literally true.

For several months I was able distinctly to follow the course of events in the remote part of Europe

previously referred to ; although far distant from it. The temper, state of health, and influences by which the person in question was surrounded, as also the personal appearance and character of those who surrounded him, was elaborately laid before me during each of the many visits I paid to Frau Meyer. Eventually she told me one day with great vehemence, that a woman whom she had previously often referred to, had succeeded in extracting from him a signed document of great importance. She told me its existence was unknown to any but the two said parties, and strongly urged me to at once acquaint my friends with this transaction, assuring me that the fact of the existence of the document having been known to outsiders being represented to the giver of it, would cause it at once to be cancelled. I immediately reported the fact, but without giving my authority for fear of ridicule, to the proper quarter, but was not believed, and there the matter ended.

At last Frau Meyer told me she saw a grave and a hearse in the egg and water tumbler, and that I should have a speedy summons to take a long journey. This I had to do immediately after that interview, and after my departure she told a friend of mine, who interviewed her, that she saw I was in much trouble, and that I was instantly to be charged from her to take a very firm tone in matters.

Some weeks later my lawyer acquainted me, as a great secret, with the fact of the woman possessing the document I had been warned about, a secret he believed to be unknown to any one but himself and the party interested, as its whole value consisted in its secrecy until the time came for its being utilised. The person to whom I had written about it months before, then turned to the lawyer and said, "What a fool I am! he" (pointing to myself) "told me

all about this months ago, and I would not believe him."

"I have little more to add to this narrative than a few details about Frau Meyer; during our many interviews she invariably explained to me what she saw, and how she saw it, but I never could follow her. Her position being so humble and obscure, her fees were most trifling; from people in her own class of life she never asked more than the equivalent of a shilling and from people like myself was most grateful for even double that sum. I have since ascertained that royalty and the highest personages in the land used to consult her, either in disguise or by deputy, particularly before a war. That she could have traced anybody out, so as to ascertain about their position, was a material impossibility; she lived without a servant, tended by a young niece, to whom she in vain tried to teach her art. She told me she had learnt the said art as a child from a dwarf, to whom her family had shown kindness, and who, out of gratitude, taught it to her in order that she might always possess a means of livelihood."

Some mediums, when they touch material objects, appear to become aware of details of their past history or ownership. When anyone else, interested in the sitting, or present in the room, knows the history of the article in question, the medium's intuition may with great probability be ascribed to telepathy. Instances, however, have occurred in which the sitter, or sender has been mistaken as to the origin of the object in question, whilst the medium has given what ultimately proved to be its true history. An example is taken from the *S.P.R. Journal* as follows:—

"Miss X. said that having accidentally discovered that she had some faculty for cognition of the kind,

called for want of a better name, 'psychometric,' she had experimented carefully in this direction, but only to find that impressions were far more veridical when spontaneous, than when sought for by experiment. In this respect, as well as in others, the phenomena seemed to her to follow the analogies of crystal-gazing, and, in the case of crystal pictures, to be explained in most of her experiences by thought transference. She did not, however, feel that these, even for herself, had been of sufficient importance to be at all conclusive. . . .

In the first case, she had seen a picture of fire (which struck her as being of volcanic, or other, not ordinary origin,) followed by one of sea waves. This occurred on the handling of a stone, known by the person who gave it into her hands to be from the shores of the Dead Sea. In the second case she had a vision apparently of the Jews' Wailing Place, on handling a stone which had actually come from that spot, though at the moment erroneously supposed by the person who handed it to her, to have come from Rome. The third case had interested her as perhaps suggestive of the method of this sort of impression. A heap of papers, the appearance of which suggested nothing but washing bills—had been placed in her hands by a friend who knew their history. On handling them for a few moments, Miss X. found herself gazing at a large meadow in which the grass seemed to be burnt and trampled, and strewn with small white articles, which for the moment she supposed to be the washing in question. The impression, however, was accompanied by a sense of horror—a perception of cruelty and bloodshed, inconsistent with the drying ground of a laundry. The papers were as a matter of fact, picked up on the morrow of the battle, on the field of Sedan."

The powers of Lady Mabel Howard seem to have been predominantly clairvoyant. I therefore give details in this chapter, rather than under the head of Automatic Writing.

Lady Mabel Howard stated concerning her power of writing automatically;—"I began to write automatically every now and then when a young girl, as some relations of mine were in the habit of doing so. I do not, however, remember any of the messages until I was eighteen."

Mr Myers wrote in *S.P.R. Proceedings* Vol. IX., page 47;—"I have myself succeeded in getting two correct answers to questions absolutely beyond Lady Mabel's knowledge. I was asked to luncheon at the house of a gentleman whom I knew only by correspondence, and of whose home and *entourage* the rest of the party knew absolutely nothing. On my return I asked, 'How many people sat down to luncheon?' The answer was 'Six,' which was right. 'What was the name of the gentleman, not my host, with whom I sat and talked after luncheon?' The pencil wrote "MO" and began to scrawl. The name was *Moultrie*. It was impossible Lady Mabel should have had any kind of notion that a gentleman of that name would have been present in a group of which she knew nothing whatever. But here the impulse to write seemed spent, and a few further questions were answered by erroneous words or mere scrawls."

The following statement, dated Downes, Crediton, Devonshire, April 8th, 1893, is signed by Sir Redvers Buller, K.C.B., and by Miss Dorothy Howard, (daughter of Lady Audrey Buller.) "Lady Mabel Howard was stopping with us this week. She was writing with her pencil just after arriving. Someone asked; 'Where is Don?' The pencil immediately answered, 'He is dead.' Lady Mabel then asked



who Don was, and was told he was a dog. No one in the room knew that he was dead ; but on inquiry the next day, it was found that it was so. One of the party then asked how many fish would be caught in the river the next day. The pencil at once wrote 'Three,' which was the number obtained the next day. A little girl in the house, who attends school in London, asked who was her greatest friend in this school. The pencil answered 'Mary,' which was again a fact absolutely unknown to Lady Mabel.

Dorothy E. Howard.  
Redvers Buller."

Statement by Lady Vane:—"Hutton in the Forest, April 8, 1894. About a month ago I lost a book, a manuscript one, relating to this house. I thought I had left it in my writing-table in my sitting-room, and intended to add a note about some alterations just completed, but next day the book had vanished. I looked through every drawer and cupboard in my room and then asked Sir Henry to do the same, which he did twice. I also made the head housemaid turn everything out of them and helped her to do so ; so that four thorough searches were made ; but in vain. We also looked in the gallery and library, (the only other rooms to which the book had been taken), and could not find it. On March 28th I asked Lady Mabel Howard to write about it. She wrote, 'It is *in* the locked cupboard *in* the bookcase, hidden behind the books.'" (Lady Mabel Howard explained:—"I saw Lady Vane on February 24th when the book had not been lost. I did not see her again till Easter Monday. The moment I got upstairs she exclaimed, 'I want you to find a book for me I have lost.' No pencil nor paper was forth-

coming, so she said, 'Never mind, write when you get home,' but I forgot, and it was two days after at the Point to Point race that she asked me again, and we wrote it in the paper the sandwiches had been in.")

"I said, 'Then it must be in the library, because the bookcases are locked.' And Lady Mabel wrote, 'Not in the library.' I said then it must be in the ante-room in the cupboard, and asked if I should find it. Lady Mabel wrote, 'No,' send Sir Henry? I asked, 'will he find it?' and she wrote, 'Of course.' Still thinking it could only be the ante-room or the library, I asked, 'Which end of the room?' Lady Mabel wrote, 'The tapestry end.' I asked, 'Is it on the window side of the room or on the other?' and she wrote, 'The other.' A friend staying in the house looked in the bookcases in the library and the tapestry end, and in the cupboard in the ante-room, (I had met with an accident and could not go myself), and could not find the book, so we gave it up.

"On April 5th Sir Henry was in my sitting-room and suddenly said, 'I have an idea! Lady Mabel meant *this* room. There is the bookcase and the locked cupboard *in* it; and the wall outside the door is covered with tapestry.' I said, 'You *have* looked in that cupboard twice, and so have I and the housemaid, and the book is not there; but look again if you like.' Sir Henry unlocked the door of the cupboard and took out all the books, (there were not more than half a dozen), and put them on the floor. The last he put back into the cupboard was a scrap-book for newspaper cuttings, and as it was rather dark he could not see the name on the back and therefore opened it to see what it was, and the lost manuscript book fell out.

“Having searched this very small cupboard four times previously, either of us would have been ready to swear that this book was not in it.”

(Signed) Margaret Vane.  
Henry Vane.

Mr. Myers commented, “Are we to describe this as a knowledge of past, of present, or of future? Or may we say that a . . . perception of this kind is not strictly conditioned by time? . . . In this case the whereabouts of the book can hardly have been supraliminally known to any human being; since the workman or servant whose hands may have slipped it into the larger book was probably unaware of what it was, or even of his own unthinking action itself. If, however, it were Sir Henry or Lady Vane who unthinkingly placed the small book in the larger one—and this does not seem quite impossible—Lady Mabel’s knowledge might have been drawn telepathically from their subliminal memory.”

## CHAPTER III

### CRYSTAL-GAZING

CRYSTAL gazing, or scrying as it is sometimes called, has been practised from pre-historic times, (3,000 years certainly), by various methods, in Assyria, Persia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, China, Japan, India; and in the form of Cup divination among the natives of the South Sea Islands. The Cup of Joseph was that by which he divined. The answers received by the Jewish High Priest through "Urim and Thummim" most probably involved some form of crystal gazing.

After the overthrow of the Roman Empire scrying seems to have fallen to some extent into disuetude, but it was resumed, and reached its height in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries at the Courts of the Emperor Maximilian, Catherine de Medici, Queen Elizabeth, and some of the Italian Princes. Dr. Dee, the most famous of English scryers, was born in 1527; his "Shew Stone" is now said to be in the British Museum. The scryer, however, was usually a child, as is the case in modern Egypt.

The above is summarized from an article by Miss Goodrich Freer in *S.P.R. Proceedings*, Vol. V. Miss Goodrich Freer says that besides polished crystals, beryls, and other gems, scryers have used vessels

containing liquid, generally water; mirrors of polished steel; liquid poured into the palm of the hand; and even the human finger nail. The part played by the crystal is mainly to concentrate the gaze; it is in fact a form of self-hypnotization. Miss Goodrich Freer gives directions for the process of crystal gazing as follows:—"Look about your room for any article having a polished surface suggestive of depth—something you can look not only at, but into; the back of a Japanese tea-tray, a glass ball of any kind, the stem of a glass vase without ornament or cutting, a plain glass bottle of ink, a tumbler of water,—take any one of these, sit down in a shady corner, arrange the object so as to guard against reflections, (a dark handkerchief is very useful for this purpose), and look into it quietly. Do not stare or inconvenience yourself in any way.—Do not be discouraged if you have no success for a long time. I have myself lost the power of crystal gazing at times for weeks together; at others I cannot look steadily into any reflecting surface without seeing a picture of some kind."

Visions seen in the crystal may be classified under three heads: Memory, Clairvoyance, telepathic or otherwise, Premonition. Miss Goodrich Freer seems to have habitually looked in her crystal, as a matter of practical utility, when she wanted to recall matters she had forgotten. On one such occasion she says:—"I had carelessly destroyed a letter without preserving the address of my correspondent. I knew the county, and searching in a map recognised the name of the town, one unfamiliar to me, but which I was sure I should know when I saw it. But I had no clue to the name of house or street, till at last it struck me to test the value of the crystal as a means of recalling forgotten knowledge. A very short

inspection supplied me with 'H—House'; (the entire word, one I knew in no other connection, was supplied), in grey letters on a white ground; and having nothing better to suggest from any other source, I risked posting the letter to the address so strangely supplied. A day or two brought me an answer, headed 'H—, House' in grey letters on a white ground."

Another instance of the crystal recalling forgotten knowledge is also given by Miss Goodrich Freer. "I happened to want the date of Ptolemy Philadelphus, which I could not recall, though feeling sure that I knew it and that I associated it with some event of importance. When looking in the crystal some hours afterwards, I found the picture of an old man with long white hair and beard, dressed like a Lyceum Shylock, and busy writing in a large book with tarnished massive clasps. I wondered much who he was, and what he could possibly be doing, and thought it a good opportunity of carrying out a suggestion which had been made to me, of examining objects in the crystal with a magnifying glass. The glass revealed to me that my old gentleman was writing in Greek, though the lines faded away as I looked, all but the characters he had last traced, the Latin numerals LXX. Then it flashed into my mind that he was one of the Jewish Elders at work on the Septuagint, and that its date, 277 B.C., would serve equally for Ptolemy Philadelphus. It may be worth while to add, though the fact was not in my conscious memory at the moment, that I had once learnt a chronology on a mnemonic system which substituted letters for figures, and the memoria technica for this date, was 'Now Jewish Elders indite a Greek Copy.'"

Miss Goodrich Freer recounts also visions of a clair-

voyant nature, some apparently telepathic. "A small key had been lost, by a member of the household, to the general inconvenience, and all other means having failed I applied to the crystal for information. All that I obtained, after careful inspection, was a glow of red colour, which, as I had taken every precaution against reflection, seemed meaningless, and so, concluding that a mere formless shining so entirely new to my experience could be merely the effect of weariness, mental or physical, I put the crystal away. The following afternoon I was playing the piano, paying no attention to what was passing in the room, when my ear was caught by the sound of a click. Before I had *consciously* recognised it as the snap of a purse, the red glow recurred to mind, and it flashed across my thoughts that A., the loser of the key, was the possessor of a scarlet morocco purse. Offering no reason, I begged to be allowed to handle it, and in an outside pocket found the missing key.

"On the evening of Saturday July 28, 1888, the crystal presented me with a picture of a mediaeval saint, carrying a rabbit. This I recognised as representing a stained glass window at a Church in the neighbourhood, which I visit perhaps two or three times a year, always sitting within view of this window. As I had not been there for many months, nor consciously pictured the spot since my last visit, I was puzzled to account for the vision. Early the next morning on waking I observed on my table a letter, which had probably lain there unnoticed the previous evening, and which I found contained a request that I would if possible, attend the early service at the church in question that morning. The friend from whom the request came was an invalid, who came to London the day before for medical treatment, whom I had believed unable to leave his

room, and from whom I had certainly not expected to receive any such message."

Miss Goodrich Freer tells how, having heard that Dr. Dee's famous "Shew-Stone" or crystal, was being exhibited at the Stuart Exhibition she and a friend went thither, "particularly anxious to achieve a collective vision. And this is what happened. We had at home a certain keyed instrument, called by courtesy 'musical.' It was now voiceless, and was practically utilised as a table to hold books. In the crystal we both saw the following scene:—C. and H. were joint possessors of the instrument, and we saw them sitting on opposite sides of the fireplace in the room where it was kept, but while I, in my picture, so to speak, faced the right, my friend faced the left. Neither of us knew that H. was in the house, nor likely to be, as he was living some miles distant from home; nor were we prepared for what followed. Both C. and H. rose and went to the instrument which was open, and H. sat down and began to play. On our return home we discovered that H. had, in fact, come in, that he had mended the organ, and that he was exhibiting his success to C. by playing upon it at that very hour."

"One evening, being tired, I was about to go early to my room, when it occurred to me to wait for the last post, already late, that I might not be again disturbed by having the letters brought to my room. I took up the Crystal rather to pass the time than with much expectation of seeing anything, for as a rule when one is tired the concentration of attention necessary to crystal vision is somewhat difficult to attain. However, I perceived a white object on a dark ground, soon becoming more clearly defined as a letter in a very large envelope torn at the edges as if not sufficiently strong to hold its



contents. Another envelope, of ordinary size, lying at the top, concealed the address, and the writing on the smaller one was too blurred to decipher. The vision was momentary only, or I might have applied the test of the magnifying glass, which is sometimes, though not always, of use in such cases. I thought it possible that the vision might be merely the result of expectation, but it seemed at least worth while, after making a note of the fact—my invariable rule whenever possible—to test its significance. As a matter of fact the letters were lying on a seat in the hall, showing white against the dark polished wood—placed there possibly by someone leaving the house who had met the postman before he had time to ring. The letters were two—the lower one, which had burst the envelope, was of the size of a sheet of letter paper not folded, and was for myself; the upper one the usual size of a note, and not for me, which may have accounted for my inability to read the address.”

A curious vision, which certainly appears to have been a premonition, is also described by Miss Goodrich Freer. “I saw in the crystal the figure of a man crouching at a small window, and looking into the room from the outside. I could not see his features, which appeared to be muffled, but the crystal was particularly dark that evening, and the picture being an unpleasant one, I did not persevere. I concluded the vision to be a result of a discussion in my presence of the many stories of burglaries with which the newspapers had lately abounded, and reflected with a passing satisfaction that the only windows in the house divided into four panes as were those of the crystal picture, were in the front attic, and almost inaccessible. Three days later a fire broke out in that very room, which had to be entered from outside

through the window, the fireman being covered with a wet cloth, as a protection from the smoke which rendered access through the door impossible."

Other interesting cases of modern scrying are recounted by the late Mr. Andrew Lang, in "Making of Religion." Mr. Lang himself gave a crystal to a young lady, Miss Angus, and requested her to try her luck at scrying. Miss Angus proved most successful, particularly on the lines of what we may call telepathic clairvoyance. On one occasion when Miss Angus was with some people whose acquaintance she had made on the previous day, and of whose affairs she knew nothing, one of them, Mr. Bissett, asked "What letter was in his pocket?" Miss Angus, looking in the crystal, saw a big building, with many men entering it and leaving it: 'Now comes a man in a great hurry: he has a broad brow, and short curly hair. The face is very serious, but he has a delightful smile.' An accurate description of Mr. Bissett's friend and stockbroker, from whom the letter was!

There was also present a lady, Mrs. Cockburn, particularly anxious to hear of her daughter, a young married woman, fifty miles away. In the midst of the stockbroker vision the scene changed, and Miss Angus saw a lady lying on a sofa, in a peignoir, and with bare feet: a hospital nurse stood by. Miss Angus mentioned this vision as a bore, and Mrs. Cockburn did not at the time connect it with her daughter. But some days later she wrote to inquire 'whether on Wednesday, Feb. 2, she had been lying on a sofa in her bedroom with bare feet?' The young lady confessed that it was even so; and when she heard how the fact came to be known, expressed herself with some warmth on the abuse of glass balls, which tend to rob life of its privacy."

It must be borne in mind that Miss Angus would not have known that she possessed a faculty for scrying if Mr. Lang had not presented her with a crystal. It seems probable that many people have the power, although they are unconscious of it. The following case was the result of a first effort of scrying; it is taken from the *S.P.R. Journal*, where all names are given in full.

Miss S. wrote:—"One afternoon, during the absence of my brother in Normandy, I was asked to look in a ring containing a semi-transparent Persian stone of dark green colour. I was to think of my brother and see if any picture in the stone would reveal his whereabouts. After a few moments of gazing with no results, I was going to hand the ring back, when quite suddenly I distinctly saw a lovely little sea-piece. A lighthouse stood at the end of a ridge of rocks which were showing well above the blue water: it being clearly low tide. A little fishing vessel with reddish brown sails was further out to sea to the left of the lighthouse. I was astonished to see it all so clearly, but thinking my brother was at Rouen, could see no connection with him. However on his return two days later I told him of my experiment, when he said that he had at that identical time been looking at exactly the view I described from his hotel window at Cherbourg. It had struck him as being so pretty, that he had called the friend with whom he was travelling to admire it with him. I thereupon made a rough sort of sketch of what I had seen, and shewed it to this friend without telling him the reason. He at once recognized it, also I may add that I have never myself visited Cherbourg either before or after."

Another instance of scrying 'by request,' and

even against the grain, is to be found in S.P.R. *Proceedings*, Vol. XII.

In *Proceedings* Vols. VIII and IX Mr. Myers gave extremely interesting particulars of crystal visions seen by a lady he terms "Miss A." He wrote :—"In the next case which I propose to give at length, crystal vision forms but a small, and an ill-recorded part of a long and complex group of phenomena centering in a lady who wishes here to be known as Miss A. I have had the privilege of an intimate acquaintance with Miss A. and her family for eight years, and have personally witnessed many of these phenomena. But it must be remembered that I am no longer dealing . . . with records of experiments undertaken at my own request, and for a definite scientific purpose. On the contrary, I have been merely invited to hear or to witness fragments of a continuous series of phenomena, which have been observed only for private interest and satisfaction, and to which Miss A. and her family were long unwilling to give any kind of publicity. I have now to thank them for permission kindly accorded to print the following pages. . . . For the present I have confined myself mainly to crystal-visions, and have asked Miss A. to reply to certain questions, and to give such instances of veridical visions as now admit of corroboration. For convenience' sake, I have interspersed between square brackets some notes made by the Countess of Radnor, the friend in whose presence many of the phenomena occurred, and who has revised these pages ; also some unsigned notes of my own."

In response to Mr. Myers' questions Miss A. wrote as follows :—

I. *Health*.—I do not know if my health affects the crystal-seeing ; I am so seldom ill that I have not

tried. If I have a headache I never look in the crystal ; but I imagine I should see equally well any way.

2. *Visualising Power.*—I see in the crystal *much* more distinctly than I could ever imagine things. I am a very bad visualiser ; and when I think of people I do so much more by the sound of their voice than by their faces or figures. I don't think I ever imagined a group in action in my life. I am very short-sighted, and seldom wear glasses ; consequently, I rarely get a clear picture of any room or scene. But when I look in the crystal I see everything as clearly as though I had strong glasses on. I cannot be sure whether either my short sight or my visualising power is better in dreams than in waking hours ; but I *think* both are better. Certainly, however, I never see in dreams any scene at all comparable in clearness to what I see in the crystal.

I have no artistic gift, although I have received a few lessons in drawing and painting. I have automatically drawn figures, a snake, etc., much better than I can draw by conscious effort.

3. *Visions apart from Crystal or other Speculum.*—I have sometimes, generally as the result of effort, seen hallucinatory figures—all of them I believe in some sense *veridical*, never mere subjective hallucinations,—standing or sitting in the room. . . .

4. *First Discovery of the Power.*—It is now some years since I first began to look in the crystal. I had already written automatically ; but knew nothing of crystal-vision. I happened one day to be lunching with some friends who talked on the subject, and said they believed that a glass of clear water acted in the same manner. Two or three of us looked in glasses of water, and after a little while I seemed to see at the bottom of my glass a small gold key. This was

so distinct that I looked on the tablecloth thinking that there must be a real key there. There was none, and nothing to explain what I saw.

5. *Speculum and Mode of Gazing.*—We bought a glass ball, and I gradually began to see a good deal in it. I have since seen in several crystals, in a moonstone, in a bracelet, etc. [I have known her see things in a polished table.—H. M. Radnor.] It does not seem to matter much what the smooth surface is ; but I have sometimes fancied that the scenes were brighter if seen in a real crystal. Occasionally I see things in a mirror, or even without any clear surface, as though I were in the midst of them.

I either take the crystal into a dark corner of the room, or wrap it up in black with only a little bit uncovered, or if it is small I hold it inside my hand and look right into it. I can see equally well in the dark. After a minute or two I seem to see a very bright light in it, which disappears after a few seconds, and then the surface appears cloudy and thick. This mist clears away and I see sometimes views, sometimes faces, sometimes letters, and all kinds of things in it. They only last for a few seconds or sometimes minutes, and between each new picture I see the same light and then mist. I cannot look in the crystal for long, as it makes my eyes water in the brightness of the light, and gives me a feeling as if a band were tied round my head ; but if I only look a little while it does not hurt me at all. The crystal seems to become a globe of light. If a sunlit scene appears, the light may continue, or it may disappear before the figure shows itself. I am in a perfectly normal condition when I look ; not sleepy, nor in a trance, nor unconscious of my surroundings.

6. *Magnification, etc.*—I have tried the magnifying

glass. The results are just the same as without it; only the glass being on the top I suppose I see in it instead of in the crystal. I cannot tell when people ask me whether the figures which I see are big or small; for I feel as if I were in some way close to them; so I cannot define their size. [I have often remarked that when Miss A. looks in the crystal she describes things not as if she saw them in a picture, but as if she were actually there, and the places and people were round her.—H. M. Radnor.] Before the figures come I see the crystal in my usual short-sighted manner, so that, for instance, I could not distinguish my own reflection in it. But the figures are quite clear; and I can follow a figure even if it appears to be walking to a great distance. But if I specially look at some detail in the picture, that detail generally seems to get clearer to me.

If I move my eyes from the crystal, or if I close my eyes, the picture disappears. If I move the crystal about I seem to shake the picture out of it. When the picture is once lost I can seldom get it again. Once or twice I have succeeded in doing so, but there have always been other pictures between.

7. *Verbal Messages in the Crystal.*—When I see writing in the crystal I see it only one letter at a time; and when the letters are put down they are found to be words spelt backwards.

8. *General Characteristics of the Pictures.*—Sometimes the things which I see are interesting, and sometimes just the reverse; sometimes true and sometimes not. If I wish to see a particular person, I cannot do so, but I probably see something quite different. I cannot tell if what I am seeing is past, present, or future. I do not think that the pictures have anything to do with what I read and see in the ordinary way. . . .

Some time ago I was looking in my crystal and saw Lady Radnor sitting in a room I had never seen, in a big red chair, and a lady in a black dress and white cap whom I had never seen came in and put her hand upon Lady R's shoulder. It was about 7.30 I think. I immediately, that same evening, wrote to Lady Radnor to ask her to write down what she was doing at 7.30, as I had seen her in the crystal. . . It was quite right; she had been sitting in a red armchair, and Lady Jane E., dressed as I described her, had come in and put her hand on her shoulder. Afterwards, when I met Lady Jane E., I recognised her, without knowing who she was, as the lady I had seen. Also when I went to the house I recognised the chair.

[This is perfectly correct. Miss A. had never been to Longford when she described my room, which was right in every particular, even to the fact that my chair was quite touching the corner of the high fender. H. M. Radnor.]

In one case I saw and described Mr. B. (a well known writer) whom I knew slightly, as hunting for a paper in the drawers of a writing table. He used a particular pen, which I described, and with his hands ruffled his hair till it stood up in a kind of halo. A lady came in and pointed to his hair and laughed. Lord Radnor inquired of Mr. B. and all this was found to be correct. He was writing with a pen unusual to him, and was looking for a paper which he wanted to send by post. His sister, (I did not know that she lived with him, and had never seen her) entered the room, and pointed laughing to his hair, just as I had seen. [Confirmed. H. M. Radnor.]"

Lady Radnor wrote to Mr. Myers on February 23, 1890, from Longford Castle, Salisbury, as



follows :—“ Miss A. has been with me now for three weeks ; but the fact is she sees and hears so many things that we really can't keep pace with them all in the matter of chronicling. The most interesting thing we have had I think is that she has several times seen in the crystal and at sittings a figure purporting to be Lord Strafford (the one executed by Charles I.) who declares that a paper signed by Henrietta Maria about himself is hidden in this house. He keeps on saying, 'Find the Queen's Seal.' Oddly enough, since this occurred I have found a scrap of paper in the late Lady Radnor's handwriting, mentioning the things in Queen Elizabeth's cabinet, and amongst others there is a deed or document signed by Henrietta Maria and the great officers of her household, including the Keeper of the Queen's Great Seal. This paper is nowhere to be found now, though the other articles are all there as named in the list. The figure says the paper had to do with his (Strafford's) release.”

Mr. Myers stated :—“ In answer to my questions Lady Radnor further writes February 25, 'By no possibility could Miss A. have seen the list I refer to (of objects in the cabinet.) It was locked up among a lot of old papers that I knew nothing of ; and as I had forgotten the fact myself I could not have mentioned it.' ”

Sir Joseph Barnby, the well-known musician, wrote as follows, in November 1892. “ I was invited by Lord and Lady Radnor to the wedding of their daughter, Lady Wilma Bouverie, which took place August 15th, 1889. I was met at Salisbury by Lord and Lady Radnor and driven to Longford Castle. In the course of the drive, Lady Radnor said to me : 'We have a young lady staying with us in whom, I think, you will be much interested. She

possesses the faculty of seeing visions, and is otherwise closely connected with the spiritual world. Only last night she was looking in her crystal and described a room which she saw therein. . . With a laugh, she added,—And the family are evidently at prayers, the servants are kneeling at the chairs round the room, and the prayers are being read by a tall distinguished-looking gentleman with a very handsome, long grey beard. . . A lady just behind him rises from her knees and speaks to him. He puts her aside with a wave of the hand, and continues reading.' . . Lady Radnor then said: 'From the description given, I cannot help thinking that the two principal personages described are Lord and Lady L., but I shall ask Lord L. this evening, as they are coming by a later train, and I should like you to be present when the answer is given.'

That same evening, after dinner, I was talking to Lord L. when Lady Radnor came up to him and said: 'I want to ask you a question. I am afraid you will think it a very silly one, but in any case I hope you will not ask me why I put the question.' To this Lord L. courteously assented. She then said: 'Were you at home last night?' He replied 'Yes.' She said: 'Were you having family prayers at such a time last evening?' With a slight look of surprise he replied, 'Yes, we were.' She then said: 'During the course of the prayers did Lady L. rise from her knees and speak to you, and did you put her aside with the wave of the hand?' Much astonished, Lord L. answered: 'Yes, that was so, but may I enquire why you have asked the question?' To which Lady Radnor answered: 'You promised you wouldn't ask me that.'

The day following was the day of the wedding,

and at a dinner party held in the evening my attention was called by Lady Radnor to Miss A. who seemed to be listening to something. On inquiring the cause, Lady Radnor asked me 'If I had not heard the raps?' as she supposed Miss A. 'was receiving a message.' I had not heard the raps, but I begged to be made acquainted as soon after dinner as possible with the purport of the message. On rejoining the ladies, I inquired at once what the message might be? Lady Radnor replied: 'The message is somewhat mysterious and there is a portion of it we cannot make out, but the general purport is:—There is danger in the . . . reservoir belonging to the Liverpool Waterworks Company.' About twenty minutes later the additional message was rapped out. 'The danger is in the left-hand corner.' Here I laughed the laugh of the scornful, and remarked: 'There is a beautiful vagueness about that, seeing that it depends upon which side of a parallelogram you stand before you can determine the left hand corner!' Four days later a paragraph appeared in most of the London dailies to the effect that the inhabitants of . . . were in a state of considerable alarm on account of some sign of weakness having appeared in the Welsh reservoir belonging to the Liverpool Waterworks Company. They had sent a deputation to the company requesting that an expert should be got down from London to examine the defect. Needless to say Miss A. had never heard the name of the place, 'an unpronounceable Welsh name,' had no interest in that part of the country, and had never been in the neighbourhood.

Two days after the wedding I was driven by Lady Radnor and Miss A. to Salisbury Cathedral to play on the organ, a magnificent specimen of cathedral organs. I was much interested in the instrument

and became absorbed in my playing. At the end of two hours I rejoined the ladies, who had been sitting in the body of the vast church. On our drive back to Longford, Lady Radnor asked Miss A. why she was so silent and thoughtful, to which Miss A. answered: 'I have had such strange experiences in the Cathedral during the time Mr. Barnby was playing.' On being asked to relate them, Miss A. begged to be excused until she arrived at the Castle, as the grinding of the carriage wheels over the newly metalled roads made it difficult to hear one another speak.

Whether this promise was forgotten, or whether callers put it out of her head, I cannot say, but I left Longford without hearing any more of the matter. Eleven months later, Lady Radnor, during a call upon my wife, told me the following: 'Miss A.'s statement was to the effect that she had seen vast processions of gorgeously appparelled Catholic ecclesiastics with jewelled crosses carried before them, gorgeous canopies and baldachinos held over them, and clouds of incense filling the place. Amongst the dignitaries was one who came near them and gazed at them with a singularly sad expression of countenance. On being asked why he looked so sad, he said: 'I have been a great sinner. I was greatly responsible for the beheading of Anne Boleyn. What adds to the sadness of it, her father and I were boys together, and our homes were in close proximity to each other.' On being asked his name, he said, 'My name is John Longland.' On being further questioned he replied: 'Mr. Barnby's music brought me here. I often hear it in Eton Chapel.'

Lady Radnor then went on to say, 'I was naturally desirous of finding out who this John

Longland might be, but after several unsuccessful efforts I was beginning to despair of solving the mystery, when five months later, I found it recorded in a long, thin, worm-eaten book, (in an old lobby cupboard at Longford), containing the name of John Longland, Dean of Salisbury in the reign of Henry VIII.. 'This was sufficiently extraordinary; but on my inquiring what connection he had with Eton, her ladyship remarked that she had already told me all she knew. Thereupon I said, 'I wonder if he is mentioned in Maxwell Lyte's *History of Eton College*? 'and I rose at once to get the book. There I found he was mentioned on pages 103 and 124 as having been Dean of Salisbury and Confessor to Henry the Eighth. He was soon translated to Lincoln which carried with it the appointment of Visitor to Eton College.—It appears—he (Longland), gave largely to the college, the ministers of the 'queere,' and even the bell-ringers were not forgotten; and by his will he gave instructions likewise that his heart should be buried 'afore the holy aultar in Lincoln Cathedral, and his body in Eton College Chapel.'—Here then, is the explanation of his connection with Eton and his love of music.

One more incident in connection with the extraordinary powers of this young lady remains to be noted. Whilst looking in her crystal during one of the days I spent at Longford, she described, amongst a number of things not necessary to mention, a room which appeared to her to be a bedroom. She appeared to be viewing the room from just outside the open door, for she said, 'If there be a bed in the room it must be behind the door on the left.'—She added: 'There is a lady in the room, drying her hands with a towel.' She described the lady as tall, dark, slightly foreign in appearance, and with rather 'an

air' about her. This described with such astonishing accuracy my wife, and the room she was occupying at a hotel at Eastbourne, that I was impelled to ask for particulars as to dress, &c. She stated that the dress was of serge with a good deal of braid on the bodice and a strip of braid down one side of the skirt. This threw me off the scent, as before I had started for Longford my wife had expressed regret that she had not a serge dress with her. My astonishment, therefore, was great on returning to Eastbourne to find my wife wearing a serge dress exactly answering to the description given above. The sequel to this incident comes some sixteen months later on, when my wife and I attended a performance at Princes Hall. We arrived early, and after placing my wife in a seat, I moved about the room speaking to friends here and there. In the course of ten minutes or so, Lady Radnor and Miss A. entered the room. During the greetings which ensued, Miss A. called my attention to a standing figure, saying: 'You will remember my seeing a lady in her bedroom while looking in my crystal; *that* is the lady I saw.' That was my wife! I only need add that she had never seen my wife.

Joseph Barnby."

Lady Barnby wrote as follows in corroboration of the incident relating to her own dress:—"9 St. George's Square, S.W. November 12, 1892.

"The account about my dress is remarkable as being out of the general course of things in this way: I had been remarking to Sir Joseph that it was a mistake to come to the seaside without a serge dress. Sir Joseph left the next day for Longford, and I wrote to Madame D., telling her to make me the gown. She got the letter Tuesday, August 13, 1889,

and in the marvellously short time by Saturday I had received the gown. Then again, it is not usual in an hotel to have one's bedroom door open when one is occupying the room, but the reason for it on this occasion was the fact that I was to meet Sir Joseph on his return from Longford, Tuesday, August 20, as a surprise in this new serge gown, and having no clock in our bedroom—I, thinking I was somewhat late for meeting the train, opened the door to call to my maid to tell me the time, as I washed my hands standing at the washstand in a line with the open door. I do not suppose I have ever done such a thing at an hotel before or since.

Edith Mary Barnby."

(Mr. Myers noted, 'These dates have been confirmed by Lady Barnby from her diary. Lady Barnby also tells me that her nurse confirms the little incident of the wearing of the serge dress for the first time on August 20th. The crystal scene, therefore, seems to have anticipated a certain definite moment.')

## CHAPTER IV

### MEDIUMS

I DO not intend to attempt a technical definition of the term *Medium*. In a sense of course anyone who has ever had a supernormal experience is a Medium; but for practical purposes in this chapter I propose to limit the term to those people who in trance or otherwise receive communications purporting to come from the departed. As, however, there is a widespread prejudice against 'professional' Mediums, I shall exclude cases connected with Mediums who receive payment; though I wish to state that it must not be assumed that I consider all professional Mediums to be dishonest and fraudulent.

On the other hand it must be borne in mind that non-professional Mediums may be untrustworthy. Mr. Myers, writing of non-professional Mediums, (*Proceedings* Vol. VII.), says:—"Of course there may be many motives, other than pecuniary, which may prompt to trickery—a morbid or malicious desire to deceive; abnormal states in which fraud is unconsciously practised: especially with children a desire to attract notice—and, quite apart from conscious or unconscious fraud, inaccuracy of observation, or carelessness of record have often transformed very ordinary incidents into apparent marvels."



The lady known as Miss A., has already been referred to in the chapter on Crystal-gazing, and phenomena other than crystal visions, though closely connected with them, were mentioned. Miss A's supernormal powers were extraordinarily varied; and it will be convenient to deal with them collectively in this chapter. Automatic writing played an important part, and was inextricably blended with communications by raps, and with visions; therefore I will commence this chapter with Miss A's own account of her automatic writing. This account is not only interesting in itself, but also is important as it reveals to some extent at least Miss A's personality, and thus enables the reader to form an opinion as to whether she was a person likely to be guilty of conscious, or unconscious fraud.

Statement of Miss A. as to her Automatic Writing.

1. *Origin of writing.* About eight years ago we first heard that people could sometimes write without knowing what they wrote; and that it was supposed that departed friends could communicate in this way. We determined to try whether any of us could write thus. We tried first with a planchette, and when my mother's hand and my hand were upon it we got writing easily. We did not at first get any message professing to come from any spirit known to us.

2. *Mode of writing.* We soon ceased to use the planchette, and I was able to write alone. I can now generally, but not always, write when I sit quiet with a pencil in my hand. The writing often comes extremely fast; at a much faster rate than I could keep up by voluntary effort for so long a time. I have to turn over the pages of the large paper which I generally use, and to guard the lines of writing

from running into each other, but except for this there is no need for me to look at the paper, as I can talk on other subjects while the writing is going on. I can always stop writing by a distinct effort of will. One curious thing is that my hand is never in the least tired by automatic writing.

3. *Character of the Script.* I get various handwritings; I may have had a dozen altogether. I may divide these simply into two classes. (A) Large and scrawly hands, which seem to aim at ease in writing, rather than at individuality, and do not divide their words, but run on without a break. Such are the hands of the so-called 'guides' and of other 'spirits' who write frequently. (Whatever the sources of this writing may be, I must use the terms which the writing uses, in order to avoid constant roundabout phrases). These large running handwritings do differ somewhat both from my own handwriting and from each other; but they most of them have a general resemblance to a large rapid scrawl of my own, with an alteration in the shape of some letters so as to avoid breaks in the continuous scrawl. I can almost always tell who is writing; but there are differences in energy, in little details of management of the paper, etc., which help me to distinguish, even before the end of the message comes, when the signature shows me who has been writing. When the pronoun 'we' is used there is no signature, as that represents 'the guides.'

(B) There are also several handwritings which keep a strongly individual character, sometimes plainly of an assumed kind; I mean writing in a way in which no one would have written in life. Thus John Longland wrote in an odd, twisted, serpentine way, and very small. We unluckily burnt all his writings except one scrap, as we did not believe he was a real

person. A spirit calling himself Detorno makes all the letters square.

Then again when the guides are writing in reply to a private question put by some friend of mine, they write wrong side up, so that the friend sitting opposite me can read the writing and I cannot. They seem to write this way just as easily as the other. Sometimes there is mirror-writing. Sometimes each word in a sentence is written backwards, beginning with the last letter of the last word. In a few cases only have we thought that the handwriting resembled what the supposed spirit wrote in life. This was especially so in the case of a communication claiming to come from my grandfather, whose handwriting I had never seen. My mother produced an old signature of his, and certainly it was like ; but there was not enough of the automatic writing to make us quite sure. When the 'spirit' or 'control,' or whatever it is, leaves me I cannot make it come again ; and writing from spirits known to us on earth is rare in comparison with writing from the 'guides,' or from quite unknown spirits giving fantastic names. Sometimes they give what they say were their real earth-names ; and then we can sometimes identify them ; although there is of course this difficulty, that if they are obscure we cannot find them ; or if they are well-known, people who give me credit for more knowledge of history than I possess, may think that I knew all about them, and that the messages come from my own mind.

4. *Drawings.*—Sometimes my hand is moved to draw instead of write. The impulse in such cases is quite equally distinct. I never know what I am going to draw till the picture is half finished. My hand begins at odd, unexpected places ; for instance, with shading in a corner, or at the ear of a profile ;

and approaches the principal lines in a way which no artist would choose. There is no rubbing out or alteration of what is once done, but if whatever moves my hand does not like the picture, it suddenly scrawls it all over, and begins again on another piece of paper. Sometimes twenty or thirty pieces of paper have been spoilt in this way,—even when the picture was all but finished; so that if I think that a picture is pretty I sometimes beg someone to take it away from under my hand for fear it should be scrawled on. I have no natural gift for drawing, and have only received a few lessons as a child. I could not even copy some of these automatic drawings. I have never of myself painted in oils, but sometimes I am moved to paint automatically in water-colour or oils. I put out a number of oil colours in a row, and my brush goes to them automatically and dabs one wet colour on the top of another, making a picture which is odd enough, but much less muddled than might be supposed; in fact, artists have said that it was curious that a distinct picture could be produced in that way. When I paint thus there is no drawing or outline, only the brush-work. These drawings and pictures have a certain boldness and strangeness about them, but they are certainly not like the work of a regular artist.

5. *Connection of Written with Other Messages.*—The writing sometimes explains or completes other phenomena, as, for instance, figures seen, or sentences begun by raps. Sometimes, on the other hand, raps will come when I wish to have writing. But the writing will hardly ever explain or allude to what really most needs explanation, namely, the crystal visions. The guides who write seem to know nothing about these visions.

6. *Subject of the Writing.*—The great mass of

the writing consists of teaching, as to religion and philosophy. This is what my guides seem to wish to give, and it is strange that it should be so, as my own thoughts have not been directed to such matters. Another large part of the writing consists in a kind of fantastic description of the way in which the world was made. The name given with these writings is Gelalius. I suppose that this is a kind of romance. It is very different from anything that I should myself ever write or dream of, nor am I at all fond of reading romances of that kind. The writing professes to be copied from a book open at that particular chapter, and sometimes a passage will be continued weeks or months after the first part of it was written, as if the book had chanced to be open again at the same place.

Some of the messages, however, deal with earthly matters. Some give general advice, some give medical advice, and some show a knowledge of things in the past or present which I do not possess. Some of these messages have been curiously right; some have been partly right, but confused or interrupted; and some have been wrong altogether. The sense of *time* seems confused, so that it is hard to say whether the incidents are meant to have happened long ago, or lately, or to be still in the future. Many of the messages we have not tested, as they were about things which did not interest us. Often, for instance, there would be messages about events in the newspapers which I had not thought or cared about.

As to what I have called 'general advice,' I think that this has always been good when it related to the conduct of the automatic writing itself. I should be told, I mean, when to write and when not to write, and what people's presence was desirable, and so forth. The advice is often quite different from what

we *wish*;—forbidding us to ask people whom we had desired to ask. There has been one very curious case where we were repeatedly told to 'send for' a gentleman whom I will call Mr. C. D., of whom we knew nothing, except that we had seen his name in the papers in quite a different connection. It so chanced that a friend of ours knew Mr C. D. and brought him to see us, but for some years there seemed to be no particular result. Lately, however, Mr. C. D.'s presence has greatly helped the phenomena; and the advice given so long ago has turned out important in a way which we could not possibly have foreseen.

On matters not connected with these phenomena I should always carefully read what the writing told me, but I should not go by it unless it seemed sensible. It does not always advise either what I wish or what I think wise; but generally it is wiser than I.

7. *Medical Advice* has often been given by a control calling himself 'Semirus,' and this has been often successful; which is strange, since I am quite ignorant of medicine, and often do not know the names either of the diseases, or of drugs mentioned. Of course I cannot be quite sure that I have never read the words, but certainly when I have written them I have often not known what they meant. At other times the facts relating to the illness have been quite outside my knowledge. One friend has given an instance of this kind; but I have not liked to ask others, as what Semirus says is generally meant for the questioner alone.

8. *Thought-Transference*.—The writing occasionally, but not often, tells me of thoughts in the minds of persons present. One day a lady handed me a letter, in a handwriting which I did not know. I

held the letter in one hand and the other hand wrote, 'Bright metal, and brown earth.' The letter was from a gentleman whom I had never seen, and who had committed suicide by throwing himself on the rails in front of a railway engine. I think that the message came from thought-transference, as I do not find that merely holding letters in my hand tells me anything about their writers unless someone is there who knows the content; and even then I so seldom succeed that I do not care to try experiments of this kind.

9. *Clairvoyance*.—I sometimes get messages which perhaps may be called clairvoyant, telling me, for instance, where lost objects are, or warning me of some danger at hand. Thus about Sept. 20th, 1888, my sister M. and I had just finished dressing for dinner in the dressing rooms leading from a large bedroom. The maid had left the room. M. had left her dressing room, and was standing in the bedroom, when suddenly she called to me, 'Get a bit of paper; there are some raps.' I came in and took an envelope and pencil and at once the words came, by raps: 'Look to the candle or the house will be on fire.' We saw that it was not the candle in the bedroom, so we went into M.'s dressing-room, and found that her candle was so close to a cardboard pocket depending from the looking glass, that it would have been on fire in a minute. It was already smoking. No servant would have come in for some time.

Again I was descending a dark corkscrew staircase at Longford, in August or September, 1889, when I heard a rapping on the stair. It was persistent, and drew my attention. I looked about with a candle, and at last saw a gold pencil-case of Lady Radnor's, with which I was accustomed to write automatically,

lying on a dark little landing of the stair. I did not know that the pencil had been lost.

10. But the most puzzling cases are those when the message professes to be from some departed person, and tells some true things, but perhaps mixes up some mistakes with them. 'Jack Creasey' was a case of this kind. I certainly had not read any newspapers about his accident, and had no connection whatever with Greenwich and Deptford. I can see no link, and I do not know either why the message should have come at all, or why it should have come so confusedly. But sometimes I do think that the message really comes from the person who professes to communicate.

Another frequent writer is a strange person to have come to us, as I knew nothing about him, and should not have thought that we had anything in common. That is Lord Chancellor Hardwicke. He—or whatever it is that takes his name—has become a sort of family friend. He has a distinct character of his own, which is not quite what I should have expected in a Lord Chancellor, for he is full of jokes and very bluff and outspoken. He has given a number of facts about himself, names of friends, and laws about marriage that he had made.

One reason which makes me think that the messages come from outside myself is the feeling which I have sometimes of rivalry, or even conflict between them. And in one long case (John Black) there seemed to be spirits purposely trying to confuse each others' messages; or perhaps one telling a story and others simply trying to prevent us from hearing it.

Again if I see figures, and then have writing which professes to come from those figures, it seems to me natural to suppose that it does come."



On the 'John Black' (pseudonym) case Mr. Myers commented :—"According as stress is laid on one or other of its aspects it may be regarded as one of the weakest, or as one of the strongest items of our present evidence. Against it are the broad facts that the central story, if central story there be, never got itself told at all ; and there were numerous inaccuracies in the fragmentary stories which were told. . . In favour of the case is, first of all, the fact that the communications do not depend upon any one person. They are shared by Miss A. with four other members of her family, and with the gentleman here called Mr. B., who is known to me, and whom I regard as an excellent witness, although for official reasons, which seem to me adequate, he wishes his name to be concealed.

Then again we have the mutually corroborative *forms* in which the message was conveyed, raps, sounds, visions, and writing. And finally besides the inaccurate or incredible statements, and closely mixed up with these, we have a considerable number of facts accurately given, and these facts of the oddest character. The impression left upon those who took part in these sittings was that they had here a fragmentary message, confused by the very conditions of its transmission, and its confusion worse confounded by some perverse or hostile agency ; but nevertheless, reflecting some true facts, known to one or more minds altogether distinct from those of the group who received the communication."

The 'John Black' case is fully reported in S.P.R. *Proceedings*, Vol. IX, pages 84-92. I shall only attempt here to summarize the leading points.

On Sunday Dec. 15th, 1889, Miss A., Mr. B., and apparently some others, "sat round a strong square table in a darkened room, and loud raps began

almost at once. Very shortly Miss A. saw the figure of a man *lying* on an ordinary hospital stretcher, and what appeared to be his double *standing* beside it. B. at the same time saw the standing figure." By raps they were told the name was 'John Black, of 2 Kendal Villas, Water Lane, Brixton, once dead through concussion of the spine. St. Bartholomew's." A low, indistinct voice spoke at the same time, and another figure appeared between Miss A. and B. 'John Black' then made reference to Gertrude Tryon, whose address could be obtained from Dr. Fyfe, 42 Montpellier Square. (On inquiry being made of Dr. Fyfe, whose address they verified through a directory, he replied that he thought he remembered the name Tryon, but could not find it in his books.)

John Black said, 'It was I that forgot Gertrude when I had the accident. Pray find Gertrude and give her money to live on.' He said he had seen her last at Richmond; and that he was travelling from Richmond when the accident occurred, and that the accident was on January 1st or December 31st. When asked if Dr. Fyfe attended him after the accident, he replied, 'No—Symons.' A 'George Smith' then said he wanted to help, and the 'guides' said they thought Gertrude Tryon had been drowned.

A telegram of inquiry was sent to the London police, asking for news of 'John Black,' and the following answer was received:—"Brixton. Head Constable. December 19th, 1889. 'John (Black) has been stopping at 2 Kendal Villas, Water-lane. Married Miss 'W.', occupier's daughter, Sunday last. Expected home next Sunday. Present address unknown." On December 20th a file of the *Times* was obtained and the following account of an accident on December 31st, 1888, was found in it. "The worst case was that of a Mr. ('Black') of Brixton,

who received such serious injuries that the doctor ordered his immediate removal to a hospital. . . Mr. (Black) was taken to St. Bartholomew's Hospital where he now lies." The paragraph stated that the collision was between a L.C. and D. train in Loughborough Junction going to Victoria and a L. and S.W. train from Richmond. A Dr. Simonds attended the injured. A telegram was then sent to the house surgeon, St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and the following reply received :—" (Black) left 11th January." (1889).

Five days later the following communication was received ; it was given partly by raps, and partly by voice. "The real John Black is here ; this is me. On January 7th I was compelled to leave the body of John Black. John Black, my body, was entered into by another. I now am bodiless, do you understand ? I and he are one. Two in one body. I married Gertrude Tryon." On being asked if he had married Gertrude Tryon in Church, he replied, 'No, I promised to marry her in January. . . I was insensible for seven days, and when I came to myself I saw just the other in my body : I could not get back, so have no power to fulfil my promise.'

Subsequent communications, much interrupted by a spirit calling himself George Smith, appeared to indicate that Gertrude Tryon had tried to commit suicide by drowning herself in the Thames ; that George Smith, or Long Jack, (said to be the same person), had pulled her out ; had helped her to murder her child, and had subsequently murdered her, and that either her child's body, or her own, was concealed at "Willow-walk—in a shed—stable—near vans ; Pickford's yards." George Smith was said to be dead also. Miss A. and B. together had a crystal vision which purported to be of Willow-

walk, and the yard in which she saw a young woman, apparently hiding. On March 14th, 1890, Miss A. went with a friend to Willow-walk, Bermondsey. After walking nearly down the whole street without finding anything like what she had seen, she suddenly recognised the grocery stores she had seen in the crystal. She could not find the archway, but went straight into the yard where Pickford keeps his vans and packs; and after going some way she found the archway she had seen close by the landing place, and recognised it as having seen it in the crystal.

Dr. A. T. Myers after some difficulty, succeeded in interviewing 'John Black' some years later, and reported:—"He looked about 25 or 26 years of age. The eyeballs were slightly prominent, the pupils regular, equal, rather smaller than normal. He said he had never quite got over the accident. Since then he had been somewhat an altered man. He had had to do lighter work than that of a safe-maker, which was his business at the time of his accident. He had headaches at times and his sight was not so clear as before the accident. He remembered very little of the accident, or of the days he spent in hospital. He said in reply to my questions that he did not suffer from walking or talking in his sleep. He was very little inclined to be communicative, and in fact, rather suspicious as to the reasons of my visit."

It is much to be regretted that a detective was not employed to investigate the past history of John Black; and also to make inquiries concerning another somewhat similar case, that of Jack Creasy. On June 27, 1891, when writing automatically, Miss A. received a communication purporting to come from Jack Creasy, who stated he had lived at Greenwich, had worked at 'Abots' and also naming 'Black-wall Rode.' He wrote:—"Help pore Mary. Ask

after pore Jack Creasy's Mary.' He stated he had been burnt by a 'piche ketl'; and gave other details.

Investigations proved that a man named Jack Creasy had worked in the tar-distilling works of Messrs Forbes, *Abbot*, and Lennard, Ordnance Wharf, Greenwich Marshes, the works being bounded on one side by Blackwall Lane; and had been killed there on July 4, 1889. The verdict of the Coroner's inquest gave as the cause of death, 'Burns from ignition of vapour from a tar still.' Some of the details given in the automatic script were apparently untrue; others were absolutely accurate. Jack Creasy's *wife* was not named Mary; but there remains the possibility that a woman of that name may have been connected with, and dependent on him; though it is unlikely that inquiries made by members of S.P.R. would elicit such a fact, even though it might be well known by his fellow workmen.

Lady Radnor wrote under date January 15th, 1893. —"The following case has always struck me as particularly curious. About 8 years ago, when Miss A.'s powers had only recently shown themselves, the automatic writing told her that I had two *guides*, 'Estelle' and 'Silvo,'—spirits who accompanied me and took an interest in my welfare. I did not think of this at first as a thing which could be either proved or disproved. But one day, when a question was mooted as to whether 'spirit guides' had ever lived on earth, I asked whether mine had done so, and was told that 'Estelle' had. I asked for her earth-name: and as we were then getting answers by raps (through Miss A.'s power), it was rapped out 'Loved voices called me Anne.' I asked for the surname. 'C-H-A was rapped out. As my maiden

name was Chaplin I at once jumped to the conclusion that that was the name meant. But the raps said 'No' decidedly, and rapped out *Chambers*. I had no associations with the name. I asked if connected with the family? 'Yes.' 'Any portrait?' 'Yes.' 'At Blankney?' (my brother's place). 'Yes.'

Now I had spent much of my childhood at Blankney, and I had been particularly fond of one picture, there, representing a lady whose name I did not know. It used to hang in the morning room, and then on the staircase, and represented a lady in a red velvet gown with a basket of cherries in her hand. As a child I used to sit and talk to this picture and make a friend of the lady with the cherries. So when I heard that the picture of my 'guide' was at Blankney I hoped it might be this lady, and asked, 'Is it the lady with the cherries?' 'Yes,' was eagerly rapped out. I at once wrote to my old nurse who was still at Blankney, and who knew a great deal about the pictures; and asked her to get the picture examined, for any name which might be on it. She got the picture taken down and carefully examined, but there was no clue. She told me, however, that she thought she had heard Mrs. S.—a connection of the family, who knew the pictures better than anyone—say that the lady with the cherries was a *Miss Taylor*. This disheartened me; but I wrote to a friend at the College of Heralds to ask whether the name *Chambers* occurred anywhere in the Chaplin pedigree. He wrote back that there was no such name in the pedigree.

The same day that I got his letter I happened to meet Mrs. S., (whom I had not seen for many years), in a shop in London. I knew that she had once

made a catalogue (which I had never seen), of the Blankney pictures; so I felt that here was my last chance. I asked her if she knew who the lady with the cherries was. 'Oh, that is Lady Exeter,' she said, 'whose daughter Lady Betty, married an ancestor of yours.' 'Do you know what Lady Exeter's maiden name was?' 'It was Mellish.' I now lost all hope, but I just asked; 'Has the name *Chambers* any association for you?' 'How stupid I am!' she exclaimed, 'Lady Exeter was a Miss Chambers of Mellish!' My friend at the Herald's College then looked in the Exeter pedigree, and, sure enough, the lady with the cherries was *Hannah Chambers*.

H. M. Radnor."

"I was cognisant of all this, and attest the accuracy of the account.

Radnor."

Sir Joseph Barnby, in his letter given in the chapter on Crystal-gazing, refers to a vision which Miss A. had in Salisbury Cathedral, when he was playing the organ. In *Proceedings* Vol. VIII., Lady Radnor writes:—"The first time Miss A. went to the Cathedral she noticed standing in the door of the chapel opposite the 'Cage' (or Hungerford Chapel), a monk, dressed in a dull sort of muddy brown, with a knotted cord round his waist, a sort of tippet and hood.—Subsequently she saw a good many of them apparently filing out of the door of the chapel, and back again, holding books and rosaries. The cross of the rosary was rather a peculiar shape.

She has seen these monks nearly every time she has been to the Cathedral, and one gave his name by raps, but owing to the fact that the Bishop and

the head verger both said that no order of monks had ever been connected with the Cathedral, we thought perhaps it was a hallucination. Yesterday, however, February 23rd, 1890, Miss A. again saw the monks, and asked what Order they belonged to; the answers were in raps.

Q.: What order do you belong to? A.: St. Francis d'Assisi. Q.: Do you mean Franciscans? A.: Yes. Q.: Did you live here? A.: No. Q.: Where then? A.: Palace.

Having obtained this clue, on my return home I looked in Britton's History of Wiltshire, and found on an uncut page that there had been a Monastery of Greyfriars (Franciscans) at the S.E. corner of the Cathedral (where the Palace and the grounds now are), and that Bishop Poore gave them the land."

In my opinion the mediumship of Miss A. has not received as much attention as it merits. The happenings to which Lady Radnor, Sir Joseph Barnby, and Mr. Myers bear witness are extraordinarily difficult to explain away. In most of the cases the possibility of explanation by chance coincidence seems untenable. Either Miss A. did see visions of, and receive communications from, the deceased Lady Exeter, John Longland, the Friars of Salisbury, and Lord Strafford; or she must have given up much time to the study of books, pedigrees, and manuscripts, and then with consummate skill reproduced the result of this study in feigned visions and automatic writing. Few people who read her simple and ingenuous account of her powers could believe her to be fraudulent. And even if this intuition of trustworthiness be disallowed as 'not evidence,' the possibility of undetected fraud seems most unlikely. For Miss A. was obviously a girl



living at home under the guarded and sheltered conditions of upper class girlhood in the Victorian era, and I should imagine it would have been well nigh impossible for her, not only to search for ancient documents, but also 'get up' accurate details of modern incidents such as the John Black, and Jack Creasy cases, without the knowledge of her family. And if Miss A. saw visions and received supernormal communications; then the denial that supernormal communications can be received is disproved. For, as Professor William James said in his Presidential address to S.P.R.—“A universal proposition can be made untrue by a particular instance. If you wish to upset the law that all crows are black, you mustn't seek to show that no crows are; it is enough if you prove one single crow to be white.”

The following is a case of veridical communication summarised from the report in *S.P.R. Journal*, obtained by Colonel Taylor in a sitting with two friends of his whose names are known to S.P.R., but who wish to be called here Mrs. and Miss E.

“Colonel Taylor sent us on December 13, 1902, a copy of his notes of the sitting, which are as follows: ‘June 20, 1902. Sat at 20 Hanover Square: (present Mrs. E., Miss E., and Colonel Taylor).

We were informed that there were many strangers in the room who were trying to ‘come in,’ one in particular who began to try to control Miss E., he banged her hand on the table, made her whole arm numb, etc. He was chased away by our people once or twice, but returned. Miss E. then suggested that he should rather try to impress her mind with his likeness and condition than seek to control her body. The suggestion must have been taken, for in a few minutes Miss E. got the following clairvoyant impression.

‘A man, medium height, with broad shoulders, but thin,’ he was wearing a grey suit of trousers, and, as Miss E. expressed it ‘he is drawing my attention to his coat which is cut round.’ The man had brown hair worn rather long, and had heavy and darker coloured eyebrows. Where his hair was drawn back off his forehead his temples were hollow, white, and delicate looking, with the veins showing blue through the skin; his nose thin and aquiline, and his hands and feet particularly small. Then Miss E. by impression, got the information that he was a friend of Mr. Piddington’s, had been in good circumstances, but took a line that brought him to grief. Mr. Piddington had remonstrated with him, but he had given no heed. His death was not altogether unconnected with starvation. Miss E. then saw him stretched on a bed or something amidst very squalid surroundings.”

Mrs. E. reported: “Miss E. asked that the spirit should use her powers of clairvoyance and impress her with his appearance. By questions, to which the table tilted in reply, we had answer that the spirit was a man who had known Mr. Piddington. Gradually the medium was impressed with a man in rough grey light suit—medium height, coat rounded at the corners, which he held up for her observation. Broad in build, seemed to have small feet; Miss E. said ‘Show me your face, that is more to the point.’ Hands looked small and delicate. ‘Now that is better, I begin to see your face’ (Description as in Colonel Taylor’s account). She could not see the whole of the face, whether there was a moustache or otherwise. ‘No, I will not look at you laid out—did Mr. Piddington see you like that?’ She laid her head on Mrs. E. to prevent the sight. ‘I am impressed with a history, how far correct I do not know.’

Mr. Piddington seems to have had some knowledge of the course of life this man was going to pursue and warned him against it, but he would not listen to him; it was unsuccessful, and he seems to have been in a state of starvation; at least I get that impression, for he was laid out in the midst of squalor and want, and was too proud to ask for help.' Mr. Piddington, it was said, did not know that he had passed away; and it had not been long since he did so.'

The next day Colonel Taylor wrote to Mr. Piddington, giving the above details. On this letter Mr. Piddington noted as follows: "Received Monday, June 23, 9 a.m. It suggests Y.Z. to me, but so far as I know he is alive.' Mr. Piddington, later that same day wrote to Colonel Taylor: 'On reading the account given in your letter I almost at once thought of a certain individual. At 11 a.m. I discovered that he died some months ago. I am absolutely certain that I had not heard of his death before. The description of the 'spirit's' personal appearance, and of his relations with me is not accurate in every detail; but it is at least so accurate that it suggested Y.Z. and Y.Z. only to me. There are other things connected with this episode which make it very striking.' Later on in the year Mr. Piddington gave Colonel Taylor further information concerning Y.Z. 'He was not a friend but a clerk of mine, and had been in the service of my firm many years. He was earning a goodish salary. . . I discovered that he had run into debt. . . I paid his debts and refurnished his home, and warned him seriously that if he got into debt again I should dismiss him. . . Some months after I had paid Y.Z.'s debts he decamped one fine morning, having robbed me of about £50. . . Into such straits did he fall that, unknown to me,

one of my porters gave him out of his wages 6d. a day—and I believe this was practically his only means of subsistence. He died at St. Saviour's Infirmary East Dulwich, on Nov. 14, 1901, one month after admission under an assumed name. . . It may be of some interest to you to learn that I inquired with which of the clerks in my city office Y.Z. had been most intimate, I was given the names of two men. One of these two men I had sent a short time before your sitting of June 20, to 20 Hanover Square with a message. From a spiritualistic point of view this might be held to explain the intrusion of the spirit.'

Miss E. had not been able to obtain any impression respecting the "spirit's" mouth and chin. When Mr. Piddington knew Y.Z. he had a beard. But the nurse who had charge of him in the Infirmary stated that he did not wear a beard during the time he was there. Concerning this Colonel Taylor notes 'I think a spirit who would give a medium an impression of his personal appearance must have a very clear idea of it himself; and that in the present case this clearness may not have existed about his chin, because he had altered his appearance in this respect shortly before his death.'

The nurse said that Y.Z. was constantly asking if he would recover, and she always made the same reply, although she knew the case was hopeless; namely, "If you'll only eat you'll get better." Although all kinds of invalid foods and luxuries were given to tempt his appetite, he couldn't eat. So Y.Z. may reasonably have supposed that starvation did play some part in causing his death; though the actual cause was consumption."

The following case was carefully investigated within a month of its occurrence by Dr. Hodgson, and

so far as he could discover, the account (from a local paper), here given was accurate.

"On February 2nd, (1891) Michael Conley, a farmer living near Ionia, Chicksaw County, was found dead in an outhouse at the Jefferson house. He was carried to Coroner Hoffman's morgue, where, after the inquest, his body was prepared for shipment to his late home. The old clothes he wore were covered with filth from the place where he was found, and they were thrown outside the morgue on the ground.

His son came from Ionia and took the corpse home. When he reached there, and one of the daughters was told that her father was dead, she fell into a swoon, in which she remained for several hours. When at last she was brought from the swoon, she said, 'Where are father's old clothes? He has just appeared to me dressed in a white shirt, black clothes, and felt slippers, and told me that after leaving home he sewed a large roll of bills inside his grey shirt with a piece of my red dress, and the money is still there.' In a short time she fell into another swoon and when out of it demanded that somebody go to Dubuque and get the clothes.

"The entire family considered it only a hallucination, but the physician advised them to get the clothes, as it might set her mind at rest. The son telephoned Coroner Hoffman asking if the clothes were still in his possession. He looked and found them in the backyard. . . The young man arrived last Monday afternoon and told Coroner Hoffman what his sister had said. Mr. Hoffman admitted that the lady had described the identical burial garb in which her father was clad, even to the slippers, although she had never seen him after death, and none of the family had seen more than his face

through the coffin lid. Curiosity being fully aroused, they took the grey shirt from the bundle, and within the bosom found a large roll of bills sewed with a piece of red cloth. The young man said his sister had a red dress exactly like it. The stitches were large and irregular, and looked to be those of a man. The son wrapped up the garments and took them home with him yesterday morning."

Mr. Myers commented:—"If we may accept the details of this narrative, which seems to have been carefully and promptly investigated, we find that the phantasm communicates two sets of facts; one of them known only to strangers (the dress in which he was buried), and one known only to himself, (the existence of the inside pocket and the money therein)."

The next case is interesting:—

"February 9th, 1899. While the circumstances herein related occurred long ago, they are among the most vivid recollections of my youth; the witnesses were intelligent and competent, and no trick or deception was possible. . . .

"It was about 1857 . . . that we began to hear of table-rappings, and other manifestations, which were taking place at the houses of various people. Now there lived in the neighbourhood a young woman of blameless character, whose name was Miss Louisa L. She lives in the same parish of Louisiana to-day, and is married and teaching school. This Miss L. was the 'medium' in the neighbourhood. Miss L. was not a professional 'medium.'

"One day this young lady was visiting at my grandfather's, and a seance was held there. Quite a number were present. A message was received

addressed to my grandfather, who just then did not happen to be in the house. The wording of the message was to this effect: 'Do you remember when I went from the card-table, and committed suicide?' The message was signed by a name totally unknown to anybody present. My grandfather finally came into the house, and was immediately shown the communication, and asked if he had known the author. He read it, and exclaimed in great astonishment and consternation, 'Yes, by the Lord Harry, I knew him well.' He then related how, very many years before that time, he was travelling with the party whose name was signed to the message, on a Mississippi or Red River steamboat, and how, while a game of cards was going on, the said party went out and killed himself. Now the 'medium', incontestably, had never heard of the man whose name was signed to the message, and he was unknown to any one in the house, except my grandfather. . . I certify to the correctness of the foregoing, and beg to subscribe myself, with great respect, your obedient servant,  
W. L. B., Ph. D."

## CHAPTER V

### TRANCE MEDIUMS

“TRANCE is a name applied to a form of motor automatism, whether healthy or morbid, in which the automatist appears to be in some way altered, or even asleep, but in which he may speak or write certain matter of which his normal personality is ignorant at the time, and which it rarely remembers on his return to waking life. If there appears to be not merely a *modification* but a *substitution* of personality in the trance, it is called *possession*. Trance occurs spontaneously in so-called somnambulism; as a result of disease in hysteria; and as a result of suggestion, etc, in hypnotic states. A fuller analysis shows classes which slide into each other in various ways.

1. The trance may be simulated and the utterances fraudulent; the facts which they contain having been previously learnt, or being acquired at the time by a ‘fishing’ process. This is usually the case with professional *clairvoyantes*.

2. The trance may be genuine, but morbid; and the utterances incoherent or in other ways degenerative, even when showing memory or accuracy greater than the normal. This is the case in hysteria, so-called demoniacal possession, etc. . .



3. The trance may be genuine and healthy, and the utterances coherent, but containing no actual fact unknown to the automatist. This is sometimes the case in hypnotic trance. . . .

4. The trance may be genuine and healthy, and the utterances may contain facts not known to the automatist, but known to other persons present, and thus possibly reached by telepathy; or existent elsewhere, and thus possibly reached by telaesthesia.

5. The trance may be genuine and healthy, and the utterances may contain facts not previously known to the subject, nor always known to the observers, but verifiable, and such as might probably be included in the memory of certain definite deceased persons, from whom they profess to come. This form of trance may suggest a temporary *substitution* of personality."

The above is quoted from a paper by Mr. Myers, *Proceedings* XVII.

Mr. Myers next gives very full details respecting Mrs. Thompson, who had never been a professional, or paid medium, being the daughter of an architect, and wife of a London merchant. Mr. Myers writes:—"I have known Mr. and Mrs. Thompson intimately since 1898: and they have agreed with me that it is the clear duty of persons possessed of supernormal powers to keep an accurate record of phenomena, and to publish so much of that record as may be possible, with serious care. For what follows therefore I claim entire genuineness. Mrs. Thompson, I would add, is an active, vigorous, practical person: interested in her household and her children, and in the ordinary amusements of young English ladies, as bicycling, and the theatre. She is not of morbid, nor of specially reflective or religious temperament. No

one would think of her as the possessor of super-normal gifts."

Mr. Myers continues:—"Mrs. Thompson sometimes writes automatically, in a waking state. But such writing is generally produced during a brief period of sleep or trance. There will be an impulse to write, followed almost at once by unconsciousness; and scrawls more or less legible will be found on awaking. But the most frequent form of communication is by *speech* in *trance*: intermingled with occasional writing, and claiming to come from some definite spirit who 'controls.'

The entry into the trance is swift and gentle. As a rule there is a mere closure of the eyelids as in sudden sleep. The impression made on the observer is that the trance is as natural as ordinary sleep. The actual sittings are of the simplest type. I bring an anonymous stranger into a room where Mrs. Thompson is, and we simply await her trance. I sometimes ask my anonymous friend to remain silent, (if, for instance, his accent should give some clue to nationality); or else we talk together on trivial topics until Mrs. Thompson's light trance supervenes—with no external symptom except a closing of the eyes and certain slight differences of manner. It does not matter where the visitor sits, nor is any contact desired. There is no 'fishing' for information. I usually converse myself with the 'control,' and in some of the best sittings I have been as ignorant as Mrs. Thompson herself of the family history, etc., of the sitter."

But before proceeding to give further details concerning sittings with Mrs. Thompson, it is necessary to say something on the subject of her controls.

When a Medium becomes unconscious another personality ostensibly speaks with her lips, writes

with her hand, answering questions put by the sitter ; and also claims to introduce, and describe, departed spirits connected with the sitter. There is usually a principal control, and also others who assist occasionally. Opinions differ, even amongst those who believe that communications from the departed are obtained through mediums, as to whether the controls are, as they claim to be, separate entities, or some kind of secondary personalities of the medium.

In the case of Mrs. Thompson the principal control is Nelly, a deceased child of the Medium, with a childish outlook upon things in general, and also it may be said, something of the impish fascination of an ordinary human child. Mr. Piddington writes of Nelly, (*Proceedings XVIII*), "Nelly is no glum archangel ; she never displays any consciousness of being engaged on a serious mission, nor indulges in prayer, pious ejaculations, or sanctimonious discourse ; and is, in fact, a downright, unsentimental, debonnaire being. So far as my experience goes Nelly plays by far the most important role in Mrs. Thompson's trances. Of the other regular control, Mrs. Cartwright, I have seen but little. . . . Mrs. Cartwright is supposed to be the spirit of a lady who was the proprietress of the school where Mrs. Thompson was educated. As represented in the trance, she is the typical school-dame of caricature. . . . Yet in spite of creating this effect of being a mechanical puppet, this trance-personality aroused in me such feelings as one would suppose could only result from intercourse with a human being. Foolish as such a confession may seem, I must in justice to the qualities of this control admit that she irritated me to so great an extent with her verbosity and pomposity that I was heartily thankful when she didn't put in an appearance. . . . Yet if Nelly is not a mere secondary

personality, no more can Mrs. Cartwright be; for Nelly has no doubts about the reality of Mrs. Cartwright, and so to speak, vouches for her."

In fact Nelly and Mrs. Cartwright often alternated in controlling at the same sitting; on one occasion Mr. Piddington records:—"From this point to the end of the sitting Mrs. Cartwright and Nelly spoke by turns, and a most amusing scene ensued, Mrs. Cartwright casting reflections on Nelly's way of doing her work, and Nelly bobbing in and out to mimic Mrs. Cartwright's pompous and platitudinous manner and diction, and to complain of her dictatorial airs. Nelly as usual wound up the sitting, and put in a parting shot:—"Mrs. Cartwright thinks I'm illiterate. 'She always thought life not worth living, if you weren't obeyed.' Mrs. Cartwright says I'm to come before I talk 'insipid nonsense' (mimicking Mrs. Cartwright's voice and accent). Her compliments come thick and fast."

It is to be feared that Mr. Piddington encouraged Nelly in her disrespectful attitude towards Mrs. Cartwright: he records with unholy joy the following tale against that precise lady: "Mr. Myers asked what had first interested Mrs. Cartwright in the subject of spirit communication, and she replied, 'I abhorred the subject of Spiritualism when on earth. Yet I could not help thinking about it, and I made up my mind that the first thing I would do on the other side was to see whether there was any truth in it, and then, if possible come back and tell people it was all nonsense.'" Mr. Piddington comments, "Mrs. Cartwright's meaning is clear enough, but her manner of expressing it suggests that she must have had more than a drop of Irish blood in her veins."

Mrs. Verrall, writing on Mrs. Thompson's trances (*Proceedings* XVII) says "I have received com-

munications from three" (controls), "Nelly, Mrs. Cartwright, and a personal friend whom I have called Mrs. B. The characteristics of the respective personalities are not very marked; all bear strong resemblances to that of Mrs. Thompson herself. . . . But, in spite of the absence of distinctive traits, there is a marked individuality about each of the three personalities which makes it quite impossible to confuse them with one another or with Mrs. Thompson. It is no more possible to mistake Nelly for Mrs. Thompson, or Mrs. Cartwright for either, than it is to mistake one living person for another. The first words of Mrs. Cartwright or Nelly, though preceded by no change in Mrs. Thompson's manner, attitude, or gesture, show instantly and unmistakably who claims to be communicating with the sitter. . . . The two personalities of Nelly and Mrs. Cartwright . . . make the same impression as would two actual human beings with whom one had a normal acquaintance; you may like one better than the other, you may recognise their merits and their limitations, but it never occurs to you to doubt their independent existence."

But it must not be inferred from the above that Mrs. Verrall and Mr. Piddington were convinced that Nelly and Mrs. Cartwright were independent entities, and not merely subdivisions of Mrs. Thompson's personality. Mrs. Verrall wrote:—"Of the question of the independent existence and interdependence of the various trance personalities, I do not propose to treat in this paper." And Mr. Piddington wrote:—"I think I ought to state what my view of these phenomena is.

"No theory of them satisfies me.

"Thus negatively only can I state my view. . . . I do not halt between two opinions, but I shilly-shally between many."

There can be no question that Nelly knew many more details respecting the relations and friends of sitters than Mrs. Thompson in her normal state had any knowledge of. Mrs. Verrall writes:—"In what was practically my first sitting with Mrs. Thompson Nelly gave me a series of descriptive touches of a dead lady with whom I was intimately acquainted, all of which were truly characteristic and familiar; but they were not the leading traits in this lady's personality, the points on which I should have seized had I wished to recall her to a third person. Nor was my attention fixed on this particular friend at the beginning, for I had given the sensitive a small hair cross and was expecting information about the owner. But the statements of Nelly were definite and accurate, referring to small details of dress,—among other things saying that my friend wore a black silk apron trimmed with lace fastened by an elastic and button round the waist, that this apron had belonged to someone else before her, (the lady had often told me that it was her mother's), and that she folded it in a particular way. Nelly also described correctly the lady's objection to the low-necked frocks which my child wore as a baby, and imitated a habit she had of pulling up the child's under-vest, to cover her bare neck. She further successfully reproduced a facial trait of this lady, a characteristic movement of the lips, and finally described her as puzzled at the situation, doubtful as to the truth of Nelly's statements that I was really present—all this very characteristic."

It has been frequently debated how mediums are able to describe in minute detail the personal appearance and characteristic gestures of deceased persons whom they most certainly never saw alive. Mrs. Thompson appears to have given many such

descriptions with remarkable accuracy and life-like detail. The impression left upon my mind after reading the notes of these descriptions is that Mrs. Thompson saw exactly what she described, viz. the deceased person alive upon earth in his or her accustomed mundane environment. That is to say she saw a vision, (similar to those seen by Miss A. in the crystal, also without it, as in the case of John Longland), of Mrs. Verrall's friend when alive, pulling up the baby's vest. It appears impossible to account for such accuracy of detail as being a mere chance coincidence. It may have been telepathy from Mrs. Verrall's subconscious self; but if so I suggest that the telepathic impression was conveyed in the form of a vision.

If mediums by telepathic influence see visions of persons in normal earthly environments, the fact that a medium often professes uncertainty whether the person seen is alive or dead would be accounted for. A crystal vision may be of a past, a contemporaneous or a future event; the sryer does not necessarily know which. We have seen that Miss A. stated, "I cannot tell if what I am seeing is past, present, or future." If the vision be of a past event some of the persons seen in it may be dead, and others may be alive. But the sryer naturally describes the vision as contemporaneous; and it will be noted that Lady Radnor stated that Miss A. described her visions "not as if she saw them in a picture, but as if she were actually there, and the people and places were round her." Just so do trance mediums describe persons and things. Miss A.'s clear definition of her powers and their limitations explains many points in connection with trance mediums.

Telepathy from the sitter is certainly an important

factor in all séances. That Nelly was aware of thoughts which passed through the sitter's brain seems to be a matter of fact, and not merely a theory. Mrs. Verrall writes:—"The cases are not very numerous, but the response from the 'control' to what has been thought, but not uttered, by me has been so rapid and complete that, were it not for the evidence of the other sitter, I should have been disposed to believe that I had unconsciously uttered my thoughts aloud."

"Thus on one occasion Nelly said that a red-haired girl was in my house that day: I was wondering whether a certain friend of my daughter's who is often at the house would be there, when Nelly added, 'Not Lilian,' exactly as though I had uttered the passing thought."

On another occasion, when Nelly spoke of an operation, I remembered that my cousin had died of cancer, but had had no operation, and as I thought this, Nelly went on to say, 'Not cancer.'

But there are cases in which Nelly stated facts which the sitter did not know, and had never known; though subsequent inquiry proved them to be accurate. On one occasion Mrs. Verrall produced at a sitting a locket which, she says: "I believed to have belonged to my youngest sister, who had died as a young child. There had been three exactly similar lockets, containing my grandmother's hair, given to myself and my two sisters, and after my little sister's death my mother carried her locket on her watch chain. After my mother's death, my sister, hearing that I had lost the hair out of my own locket, gave me hers, keeping the one that had belonged to my little sister and my mother. But I had misunderstood her, and thought that it was this one that I had, and was taking to Mrs. Thompson.



After saying that the locket was not mine, Nelly gave a short description of the lady to whom it had belonged, which was wholly inapplicable to my mother, though appropriate to my (surviving) sister. I had consequently reckoned the statement as incorrect, and it was only on mentioning the matter to my sister that I found that I had been mistaken, and that Nelly's account of the previous ownership of the locket was, as far as it went, more accurate than my own."

A somewhat similar case is recorded by Mr. Piddington, (*Proceedings XVIII*), when Mrs. Benson, widow of the late Archbishop of Canterbury, was the sitter. Mrs. Benson had brought with her a brooch packed up and sealed by Miss Margaret Benson, who was then ill. Mrs. Benson wrote, "The brooch belongs to my daughter. It was put together by the nurse of the whole family while she was living with my mother before I married. It contains the hair of my mother and my three brothers and myself, as well as that of a brother and sister who died as children. . . My daughter had taken the brooch out of a red silk-lined dressing case and wrapped it up. When I saw it unwrapped in the medium's hand I *mistook it* for another brooch which I myself possess, which was *not* in a rosewood box."

As soon as the fingers of the Medium touched the parcel Nelly exclaimed "The person who wrapped this up was ill." And then she continued:—"Mother's brooch. This was her brooch and belonged to more than one generation—a lady—two children died—her own hair and two dead children's made into a brooch. The lady seems to be the third generation—grandmother, mother, grandchildren." Then after giving some correct details respecting Miss Benson's illness, Nelly stated that she, *i.e.* Miss

Benson had been disturbed by the wind banging something the night before she packed the brooch, and then continued :—"The lady that has this brooch was next generation. There was a workbox—rose-wood workbox—little silk places where you keep silks and ribbons." Mrs. Benson comments "The wind was so high the night before my daughter packed it up that for the first time during a fortnight's illness the shutters were barred all night. N.B.—I did not know this at the time of the séance. . . Rose-wood dressing case from which brooch was taken belonged to my daughter's sister's godmother. After a hunt for brooch it was found in a drawer in the dressing case, the only one which was lined with red silk."

There is no suggestion here that the information given by Nelly was received from deceased persons; the details of Miss Benson's illness might be obtained telepathically from Mrs. Benson; but the identity of the brooch, and the detail of a windy night having preceded the packing, were unknown to Mrs. Benson. If obtained telepathically, it must have been indirect telepathy from Miss Benson, who was not present; though probably she had been thinking of the sitting. Or it may have been a case of direct clairvoyance.

But though there is perhaps no instance in which communication with a deceased person can be pronounced absolutely certain, there are a few cases in which the sitters were for the moment at any rate, convinced that such was the case. Mr. Piddington records that on January 11th, 1901, a few months after the death of Professor Henry Sidgwick, "The Sidgwick control made its first appearance, and, though the words spoken were few, the voice, manner and style of utterance were extraordinarily lifelike: so much so indeed that, had I been ignorant of

Professor Sidgwick's death and had happened to hear the voice without being able to tell whence it was issuing, I think I should have unhesitatingly ascribed it to him."

And again on January 21st—"The Sidgwick control then took Nelly's place, and again the impersonation was most extraordinarily lifelike. The only two occasions on which I have been *émotionné*, or have experienced the slightest feeling of uncanniness during a spiritualistic séance, or have felt myself in danger of being carried away, were during these two manifestations of the Sidgwick control. I felt that I was indeed speaking with, and hearing the voice of, the man I had known; and the vividness of the original impression has not faded with time,"

Dr. van Eeden, of Bussum, Holland, who obtained from Mrs. Thompson details respecting his environment in Holland which he felt sure could not be attributed to chance coincidence, wrote:—

"How can we eliminate the possibility of imposture? The possibility of fraud seemed untenable. I got information about objects whose origin was known only by myself. I brought a lock of hair of a man who had lived and died at Utrecht, and the hair was immediately connected with that name, and on subsequent occasions referred to as the 'Utrecht hair,' I brought a piece of clothing that had belonged to a young man who had committed suicide. *Nobody in the world* knew that I had kept it, nor that I had taken it to England with me for this purpose, and yet I got an exact description of the young man and the manner of his suicide, and even his Christian name was given. For me this excluded all fraud or coincidence. . . The choice between spirits and telepathy remains. . . The young man

who had committed suicide gave as proofs of his identity Dutch names of places and persons which were not at all in my mind at the moment. This might have been unconscious telepathy. At the same time proper names were given which I had never heard myself. I did not even know such names existed. Yet later, in Holland, I came across people who bore these very names, though their connection (if any) with the young man I could not find out. But what value could they have in proof of identity? Could we not always say that the medium, being clairvoyant, had seen these names somehow in connection with the young man, and so used them to complete the *vraisemblance* of her creation?

“As a very curious observation I may relate the following: The young man, as mentioned in the notes of my sittings, had recovered from his first attempt at suicide, but the wound in his throat left his voice hoarse and gave him a peculiar little cough. As soon as I came near Mrs. Thompson with the piece of clothing, her voice became more or less hoarse, and by and by the same peculiar little cough appeared, and grew more accentuated at each subsequent sitting. After three sittings it kept on at intervals between the sittings, and in the end did not leave her altogether *until I had left England* taking with me the piece of clothing—a flannel vest.”

Dr. van Eeden then goes on to say that his opinion has varied as to the origin of the communications made through Mrs. Thompson, and concludes:—“Here I think I may make a definite and clear statement of my present opinion which has been wavering between the two sides for a long time. . . . At this present moment it is about eight months since I had my last sitting with Mrs. Thompson in

Paris, and yet, when I read the notes again, it is impossible for me to abstain from the conviction that I have really been a witness, were it only for a few moments, of the voluntary manifestation of a deceased person."

I am of course aware that the subjective impressions of Mr. Piddington and Dr. van Eeden are not scientific proof that they received communications directly from deceased persons. But I do claim that such evidence would have weight, and be considered of importance, in a trial for murder by judge and jury; and that the verdict of 'guilty' or 'not guilty' has often been largely influenced by the impressions of reliable witnesses.

A case which certainly contains some circumstantial evidence, extremely difficult to explain away, is the following:—

During a sitting with Mrs. Thompson, Nelly said to Mr. Piddington, 'I get an influence connected with the lady at your house named Dorothy.'

As far as Mr. Piddington then could remember there was no one in his house of that name: but when he returned home he discovered that a hospital nurse, who had arrived there the previous evening, was called Sister Dorothy. He may have been told her name before she arrived, but had totally forgotten it.

About two months later, some time after the nurse had left Mr. Piddington's house, Nelly reverted to the subject, and said she had a message for Sister Dorothy from a little dead brother, 'We call him Bob—Bobby. He's got something wrong with him in the neck and ear, and it made his head a little bit sideways.'

Mr. Piddington continues, "I wrote to Sister Dorothy to enquire if there were any truth in this

statement, her reply was to this effect: that she had no dead brother named Bobby, but she remembers a little boy in her hospital of that name, rather a pet of hers who had a diseased bone in his neck. The neck was kept between sandbags, and this in time made his ears sore."

Nelly was always hazy in the extreme respecting relationships, and in this case may have considered that as Bobby spoke of Dorothy as 'sister,' he himself must necessarily be her 'brother.' In all other details Nelly's statement was absolutely correct. If she didn't obtain the information from the deceased Bobby, from what source could she have obtained it? The burden of proof here rests with the sceptic.

It appears to me very singular that in the many discussions on the subject of trance mediums no attempt has been made to compare their powers with Miss A.'s mediumistic powers out of trance, as the latter throw much light upon the former.

The case I give next has many points of similarity with the visions of Miss A.; it is given by Mr. Piddington. (*Proceedings XVIII*). Mrs. Thompson's own account, written at the request of Mr. Piddington, is as follows:—

"May 24th, 1900.

On Monday, May 7th, 1900, about 7.30 in the evening, I happened to be sitting quite alone in the dining-room, and thinking of the possibility of my 'subliminal' communicating with that of another person—no one in particular. I was not for one moment unconscious. All at once I felt some one was standing near, and quickly opened my eyes, and was very surprised to see—clairvoyantly of course—Mr. J. G. Piddington.

"I was very keen to try the experiment; so at

once spoke to him aloud. He looked so natural and life-like I did not feel in the least alarmed.

"I commenced:—

"Please tell me of something I may afterwards verify to prove I am really speaking to you."

"J.G.P.—'I have had a beastly row with'—(naming a specified person).

"R.T.—'What about?' (No answer to this).

"J.G.P.—'He says he did not intend to annoy me, but I said he had been very successful in doing so, whether he intended to or not.'

"After saying this he disappeared, and I began to wonder whether there was any truth in what I had heard from—what appeared to me to be—Mr. Piddington. I did not like to write and ask him if it was so. On May 24th I had an opportunity of telling him, and was very surprised to hear it was the truth.

"I also told him I had guessed at the subject of the 'beastly row.' My conjecture was quite accurate.

(Signed) Rosalie Thompson.

"P.S.—People often ask me how I talk with Nelly: just as I talked with Mr. Piddington on May 7th. I seem to see and feel what they are saying. The lips appear to move, but they make no audible sound. Yet unless I speak aloud they do not seem to understand me. I have tried Nelly when she appears to me by asking mental questions, but she does not understand unless I speak aloud and very clearly.

R.T."

Mr. Piddington comments, "It was this experience of Mrs. Thompson's which compelled my belief in her supernormal powers. At the time I saw no way

of getting round it and I see no way now. But to my great regret I do not feel myself at liberty to disclose all the circumstances. The case must accordingly lose much of its evidential value, and I therefore cannot hope that it will produce on others the same conviction that it has on myself." Mr. Piddington, however, explains with some detail the utter impossibility of Mrs. Thompson obtaining information of the 'beastly row' by normal means, and mentions that in a letter his adversary had said that 'he had not intended to annoy me': and that he had observed on reading it, 'Then he succeeded admirably without intending to.'

Mr. Piddington then continues:—"But it is not only the veridicality of the vision, but also the form of it which deserves attention.

"With eyes open and experiencing no conscious lapse of consciousness Mrs. Thompson sees and cross-examines a phantasm of the living. The phantasm refuses to answer one question, and after it has vanished the percipient guesses—consciously guesses—makes a shot at—the answer, and guesses right. Was this mere dramatisation? or do we here get a hint of a combination of processes which may play a great part in clairvoyant phenomena? that is, a combined exercise of supernormal faculty and of normal inference, either from facts previously known or from knowledge just supernormally received?

"It seems to me now, and it seemed to me at the time, that it is just possible that when once Mrs. Thompson had learnt that I had had a 'beastly row,' and that that row had been between myself and a certain person, she might by a lucky shot have hit on the subject of the row.

"Is there, though, something more than this? I



fancy there may be. Something, namely, that confirms the correctness of the deduction normally arrived at. Thus I imagine that though Mrs. Thompson may through the exercise of her ordinary mental faculties have guessed at the subject of my quarrel, some other faculty was called into play to confirm the truth of the inference; and whatever that other suppositional faculty is, I conceive that it is akin to telepathy, and super-normal."

Mrs. Verrall at the conclusion of her paper on Mrs. Thompson's trance phenomena (*Proceedings* XVII, 217) writes as follows:—

"It is not my intention in this paper to express any opinion on the general character of the phenomena presented by Mrs. Thompson. . . . That Mrs. Thompson is possessed of knowledge not normally obtained I regard as established beyond a doubt; that the hypothesis of fraud, conscious or unconscious on her part, fails to explain the phenomena, seems to me equally certain; that to more causes than one is to be attributed the success which I have recorded seems to me likely. There is, I believe, some evidence to indicate that telepathy between the sitter and the trance personality is one of these contributory causes. But that telepathy from the living, even in an extended sense of the term, does not furnish a complete explanation of the occurrences observed by me, is, as readers of this paper will have noticed, my present belief."

The subject of the 'controls' of Mediums is a most perplexing problem. But I think I am correct in saying that the majority of the people who have studied it carefully incline to the opinion that the controls are secondary personalities, dream personalities created by the Medium's sub-conscious self.

But some who have had a very large experience of sittings with Mediums retain a feeling that, in some cases anyhow, there may be behind these controls a real, separate personality, who occasionally comes into play.

There is no doubt that Nelly was extraordinarily life-like, but this very fact throws doubt upon her being the spirit of a baby who died when four months old. I venture to suggest the possibility of Nelly being a reconstruction — resuscitation — I hardly know what word to use — of Mrs. Thompson herself as a child.

Some people retain an extraordinarily vivid recollection, not only of the events of their childhood, but of their own childish personality and outlook. If in trance Mrs. Thompson's grown-up personality faded, and her childish personality emerged, the human reality of that fascinating child, Nelly, would be accounted for: though to me, at any rate, it seems an impossibility that a baby who died at four months old could by any means have developed the essentially mundane outlook with which Nelly surveyed persons and things.

Also this hypothesis would, it seems to me, largely account for Mrs. Cartwright, who was life-like, but not as much so as Nelly. A child realises the personality and idiosyncrasies of its teacher with great vividness, and not infrequently mimics them. Mr. Piddington wrote (*Proceedings* XVIII, 126) "I felt as if the medium might be reproducing in her trance a cut and dried delineation of her old mistress." If Mrs. Thompson dreamt herself a child again, this reproduction of her old schoolmistress would be very natural. And it may be noticed that though Nelly 'sauces' Mrs. Cartwright, and mimics her, still she to a certain extent defers to, and obeys

her, which would also be natural to Mrs. Thompson as a child, though not at all natural in the case of a spirit who had departed at four months of age to regions where one hopes, at any rate, that persons of the Mrs. Cartwright type no longer exercise authority.

## CHAPTER VI

### AUTOMATIC WRITING AND CROSS-CORRESPONDENCES

MR. F. W. H. MYERS died on January 17, 1901. Nine years earlier he had written: "Messages given through automatic writing . . . have perplexities of their own . . . But with all the doubts as to their true origin these written messages seem to me to form our most hopeful approach to the exact knowledge we require," *i.e.* of continued existence after death.

It is notable that almost immediately after the death of Mr. Myers a new type of automatic writing developed. But it must be remembered that a few months after Mr. Myers' death, his posthumous work, *Human Personality*, was published, and very widely read; and this caused an increased interest to be taken by many people in psychical phenomena. But though the book may account for a number of people making attempts to write automatically, it cannot in itself be said to account for the veridical contents of much of the automatic script which resulted from these attempts; nor for the cross-correspondences between various scripts which gradually have been discovered.

It will be of interest to give in full Mrs. Verrall's own account of the beginnings of her automatic

writing: always bearing in mind that she had no success whatever until after the death of Mr. Myers.

In *Proceedings* XX, Mrs. Verrall wrote:—

*Early attempts.*

“For some considerable number of years I have been interested in automatic phenomena, and have tried to obtain them in different ways. My experiences in Crystal Gazing during the years 1889—1892 were recorded and published in the *Proceedings* S.P.R., Vol. VIII, p. 473, et seq. With a few doubtful exceptions the pictures so seen were purely fantastic. With Planchette or a table, if I have sat with a second person, I have usually obtained movements, though the results were seldom of any interest; but till recently I was quite unable to get any movement with Planchette when sitting alone, or any writing with a free pencil except a few letters repeated in meaningless combinations, e, v, r, appearing and reappearing as ‘every, very, ever,’ and so on. It is probable that the letters of my surname, the word most frequently written in ordinary life without conscious effort, were responsible for the words produced.

I had come to the conclusion that automatic writing was not possible to me; but in January 1901, I resolved to make a fresh attempt, and on this occasion the attempt was more persistent than had been the case with the earlier efforts.

*Renewed attempt.*

On January 19, 1901, I spent a quarter of an hour or more in sitting perfectly still in a very dim light with a view to giving myself the opportunity of recognising any impression that I might have. I continued this daily, and after two or three days I

put my hands on a Planchette or held a pencil. But I obtained no satisfactory results. Unless my attention were actively engaged in some other direction the pencil did not move; if I tried to occupy my attention with reading, the pencil merely reproduced some of the words of the book, or occasionally traced characters resembling those of a brass table on which the pencil and paper lay; Planchette was altogether useless. After February 2, I left off the attempts for some days, and two later attempts on February 12, and 13, produced no better results. I made no further effort till March 3, and again on March 5; it was on this latter date that what I regard as the first successful result was obtained.

*Successful attempts; script obtained in Latin.*

When I resumed the attempt in March, I decided not to endeavour to distract my attention by reading, but to let my mind passively follow any suggestions which might come from movements of the pencil or otherwise. On March 3, much the same sort of thing was written as in the earlier attempts, words not making any intelligible sense but not wholly disconnected; these words were followed by Greek letters, Greek words, and odd signs. On the second occasion, March 5, at first the words presented themselves to me as wholes, but the sequence was unintelligible; then I suddenly felt a strong impulse to change the position of the pencil and to hold it between the thumb and first finger. Ever since an attack of writer's cramp, some sixteen years ago. I have held the pen or pencil between the first and second finger, and I had naturally held the pencil in the same way when trying to get automatic writing. Now, however, in obedience to the impulse, I took

the pencil between my thumb and first finger, and after a few nonsense words it wrote rapidly in Latin. I was writing in the dark and could not see what I wrote; the words came to me as single things, and I was so much occupied in recording each as it came that I had not any general notion of what the meaning was. I could never remember the last word; it seemed to vanish completely as soon as I had written it. Sometimes I had great difficulty in recognising what was the word I wanted to write, while at other times I could only get part of it. When I had filled one sheet of paper, I turned up the electric light and read what had been written before going on to the next sheet. On this first occasion, March 5, 1901, my hand wrote about 80 words almost entirely in Latin, but though the words are consecutive and seem to make phrases, and though some of the phrases seem intelligible, there is no general sense in the passage.

Till the end of the month, with a very few exceptions, I continued daily to write fluently in Latin, with occasional Greek words. The writing was not intelligible throughout, but it improved, and was very different from the mere rubbish with which it began. Whole phrases were intelligible, and in spite of blunders of every description the general drift was often easily apparent. The actual writing was my own normal handwriting, and the amount produced at each sitting remained about what it had been on the first occasion. I continued to use paper of the same size, and the script usually filled one page, that is, it consisted of from 70 to 90 words, but occasionally the impulse to write continued after the page was full, and I then took a second piece of paper. The end of the impulse to write was often signalled by the drawing of a long line. After the

first two or three times of writing I never read what I had been writing till the end, and though I continued to be aware of the particular word or perhaps two words, that I was writing, I still retained no recollection of what I had just written and no general notion as to the meaning of the whole.

*Appearance of English.*

On March 31, occurred the first intelligent use of English, namely the word 'Remember' in peculiar and separated letters, followed by 'A.V.E. vale,' at the termination of the script; on April 3 the script ended; 'God à Dieu Good be ye Tuus'; and on April 16 a remark in English was interpolated in the midst of the Latin. From that time onward English has appeared and continues to appear quite as frequently as Latin; while there has been a good deal of Greek also from time to time. Speaking generally these three languages are the only languages used, though occasional words from others are to be found.

Generally speaking, my intention has been to try for writing about twice a week, but sometimes I have been too much occupied with other matters to make the necessary effort; sometimes the writing itself has suggested that I should leave off for a time; or I have felt disposed to wait without quite knowing why. On the other hand, I have occasionally felt desirous of writing more frequently than twice a week, or I have deliberately resolved beforehand to try the experiment of writing on consecutive days.

The writing is not always uniform in size, but varies a little as my own writing does. . . Sometimes however, the handwriting is wholly unlike my normal hand. . . . The handwriting of some words in the script of May 8, 1901, as noted at the time, is not



mine ; it is not known to me and does not recall any writing that I know. I subsequently found that very similar words had been spoken in trance by a sensitive at a distant place and at approximately the same hour. . . . In one case the script produced a very marked handwriting quite unknown to me ; . . . as I was writing by arrangement at the same time as another friend, I sent her a copy of the script and found not only that the contents of the message were in part intelligible to her, but that the handwriting resembled that of a lady unknown to me, (alive), of whom she had been thinking in connexion with the subject of my message."

Mrs. Verrall went on to say that the script was full of inaccuracies, but often of a kind not paralleled in her normal writing ;—"As far as I can judge the two chief errors to which I am normally liable seldom occur in the script. I am apt to omit a letter occasionally, and a word often, but I can find few traces of this in the script. . . . The commonest error in my normal writing . . . is the omission of the initial letter of a word ; . . . this seems to be wholly wanting in the automatic writer. . . .

"English, Latin and Greek are freely . . . employed, . . . Of modern foreign languages there is hardly a trace. . . . French I know well and read as easily as English ; I speak it also, and indeed constantly dream in it. . . . It has always seemed to me one of the most unaccountable features of this automatic writing that French, which has for me long and deep associations of familiarity and sentiment, should altogether fail to appear. I should certainly have expected to find traces of French in any expression of my profounder feelings. The complete absence of such traces is one of several indications that the

subliminal strata tapped, so to speak, in the automatic writings are not those reached by the usual ways of dreaming or semi-conscious thought. . . .

"*Puns.* Here is another point in which my subliminal and supraliminal selves differ. I have hardly ever made a pun in my life; I do not easily see analogies between words, and I am seldom amused by comic puns, or interested by the ancient oracular play upon words. But it is otherwise with the automatic script. It is fond of punning, and especially of punning upon names; it is indeed quite like an ancient oracle in its desire to find a meaning in a name, as well as in its complete disregard for the laws of philology. . . .

"Another characteristic of the script not shared by my normal self is a tendency to break out into verse. I am by no means a poet and have great difficulty in producing even a very short set of verses in English. . . . Several fragments of verse have occurred . . . in the automatic script, in each of the three languages, (Greek, Latin, and English), used. . . . There seems an increasing tendency to produce English verse."

As regards varieties of dramatic form assumed by the script; Mrs. Verrall stated:—"The mass of the writing consists of unsigned observations, not to be attributed to any identifiable person, though often expressed in the first person 'I,' and addressed to someone in the second person 'you,' presumably myself. But two other types occur—one where the script seems to represent a conversation between two or more persons; and another where a direct personal note is introduced by the appending of a signature to the supposed communications.

"On May 11, 1901—I wrote in the dark at 11.10 p.m. Some earlier statements in the script were veridical; the conclusion was as follows:

(Translation of original Latin). 'This is what I have wanted, at last. Justice and joy speak a word to the wise. A.W.V. (Dr. Verrall's initials) and perhaps someone else. Chalk sticking to the feet has got over the difficulty. You help greatly by always persevering. Now I can write a name—thus, here it is!' The rest is unintelligible. A drawing of a bird with a large head, embellished by a demonic grin, was made.

Mrs. Verrall continued, "I showed the script to my husband next day. We could make nothing of it, and were much amused at the drawing of what we often referred to in the next few days as the 'cockyoly bird.'

On the evening of May 16, I saw in the *Westminster Gazette* an account (abridged) from the *Daily Mail* of an incident occurring on the night between Saturday, May 11, and Sunday, May 12, which recalled to me the script above quoted. The writer of the account in the *Daily Mail* stated that a friend of his had been compelled to leave his rooms, 'in one of the Inns within a stone's throw of the Law Courts,' on account of 'uncanny happenings.' The writer and a friend of his arranged to sit through the night of May 11, in the empty rooms and watch events. Precautions were taken to prevent intrusion, and powdered chalk was spread on the floor of the two smaller rooms 'to trace anybody or anything that might come and go.' The watchers saw a door unlatched and open slowly, and heard the click of the handle. This was at 12.43 a.m. At 12.56 the same thing occurred to another door. Both doors were closed, and no mark was visible on the powdered chalk. At 1.32 a.m. the right-hand door opened again as before, and at 1.37 the left-hand door opened. At 1.40 both doors closed simul-

taneously 'of their own accord.' Between 1.45 and 1.55 this happened twice again, so that there were in all four openings and three closings unaccounted for. (The first time the doors had been closed by the watchers). The last openings took place at 2.7 and 2.9, and both watchers noticed marks on the chalk in the two little rooms. On examination it was seen that the marks were 'clearly defined bird's footprints in the middle of the floor, three in the left-hand room and five in the right-hand room.' The marks were identical, and exactly  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches in size; they might be compared to the footprints of a bird about the size of a turkey. There were three toes and a short spur behind. Nothing further occurred. The footprints were seen at 2.30; they waited till 3.30, and then went home. No attempt is made to explain the occurrence, and the correspondent says that he has 'simply stated facts.'

The statement in the script that the sticking of chalk to the feet got over the difficulty, followed by a drawing of a bird with a leer, is a singularly appropriate comment on the story in the *Daily Mail*. But the remarkable point is that the script was written at 11.10 p.m., whereas the first opening of the door did not occur till 12.43 a.m., and the footprints were not observed till 2.30 a.m. The statement, therefore, of the script anticipated the reported event by some three hours, and its publication by a still longer period. It is true that the sprinkling of the chalk probably preceded the writing, but there is no reason to think that the writer of the tale had any expectation as to the sort of marks he might find in the chalk. Nothing that had previously occurred suggested that the supposed disturber of the room was a bird. (The writer of the article in the *Daily Mail* was seen by Mr Piddington, and stated

that he and his friend had no anticipations as to what they might discover.) . . .

The question of a connection between the story and the script is not affected by the value of the story. The script was obtained on May 11, and whether or not a bird made marks in the chalk in the early hours of May 12, it is certain that a story to that effect was printed on May 13 and brought to my knowledge on May 16."

Many communications, apparently from the Myers control, were subsequently received by Mrs Verrall; but these will be more conveniently dealt with in connexion with the scripts of other automatists, particularly Mrs Holland.

Mrs Verrall, describing 'A new group of experimenters,' wrote as follows:—"On September 26th, 1908, when I was away from home, I received a letter from a complete stranger in Scotland, enclosing a considerable number of specimens of automatic script . . ." The writer, who is here called Miss Mac, gave a brief account of the origin and development of the script, and explained that lately the controls had urged that the script should be sent to Mrs Verrall. The letter, dated September 23rd, 1908, was as follows:—

'We are a family of five and are all more or less, as well as our parents, able to write to a certain extent with Planchette. . . . It is about nine months ago that I read Mr Myers' *Human Personality* for the first time. I was greatly interested in it. We had a Planchette in the house, but had never succeeded in writing with it when on one or two occasions we had tried. However, I read in the above book that several people had tried for a considerable period before getting legible writing, so that I felt encouraged to try again. After about

eight weeks of practice, generally once a day, the huge illegible scrawling gradually decreased in size and then changed into handwriting, words, and then sentences. We told the Planchette to stop after every word, instead of stringing them together as at first, and now it generally refuses to go on until lifted and replaced after every word. . . .

'I, when from home, ceased writing for three months, and on my return . . . practised with my brother A., with the result that I cannot now write legibly with any other member of the family. . . . A. writes more or less with every member . . . but best with me.'

Mrs Verrall, in giving details respecting the script, mentions that an attempt was made "to relate a complicated story in Italian verse. This language was unknown to Mr. A. Mac; and Miss E. Mac, the other automatist, had only a slight knowledge of it. The Italian of the script is fluent, but inaccurate and ungrammatical; it contains words not to be found in dictionaries. . . . The general meaning is, however, plain enough. But it is difficult to say with certainty that it shows knowledge beyond that possessed by Miss Mac, though it is certainly not the sort of thing that she would or could consciously and deliberately write.

About the middle of September there arose what Miss Mac described as 'a regular clamour of entreaty,' on the part of the controls, that she should write to Mrs Verrall. "My name had occurred in the script of July, and the idea of sending some of the 'Sidgwick' messages to me had arisen, but nothing had been done, as Miss Mac did not think the messages sufficiently definite to warrant her in writing to an absolute stranger. 'It was only,' as

she writes, 'Planchette's entreaties that have made us change our minds. . . .'

On September 18, (the control) urged the desirability of despatching the specimens to me, so that they might reach me 'by the next Saturday week,'—before that is, Saturday, September 26, 1908—and this was done." Further on Mrs Verrall comments, "This latter fact at once struck me. My daughter and I were engaged in an experiment necessitating the comparison of our scripts at fixed intervals, and it had been arranged that the next comparison should be made on September 27, the reason being that we were to separate on Sept. 28, for some weeks. . . . If therefore any question were raised by the newly received script, which necessitated a reference by me to Miss Verrall's script, September 27 was the last possible day on which that reference could be made. . . . In view of the appropriateness of another date named in the Mac script, this date may perhaps be regarded as not due to accident."

The other date incident is the following; after sending the script and first letter to Mrs Verrall, as related above, when the Mac family attempted automatic writing they obtained the following,—'Wait till V writes Wednesday week,' i.e. October 7. And this was reiterated a few days subsequently. Mrs Verrall wrote on receiving the script, saying that it would be some time before she could comment in detail on it. But she was able to do so earlier than she expected, and on Wednesday, October 7, Miss Mac received a letter from Mrs Verrall, commenting at length on the script.

Mrs Verrall states:—"At the time when Miss Mac wrote (first) to me there was absolutely no acquaintance between any members of the two families. A cousin of Miss Mac's was a college

friend of Miss Verrall's, and this served as an introduction for the correspondence that began with the sending of the script."

But before proceeding to give further examples of automatic script, it will be convenient to give a short account of other automatic writers or scribes. Mrs. Sidgwick, (*Proceedings* XXIX, pp 256, 257). describes them as follows :—

"We have had Mrs. Verrall, who developed her power of automatic writing in the early months of 1901, and continued until her death last year; and Miss Verrall, (Mrs. Salter), who began writing occasionally under her mother's influence in 1903, and took it up more regularly in 1906. Mrs. Holland who had previously written automatically from time to time, put herself in communication with Miss Johnson in 1903, after reading Mr. Myers' book *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*, and continued for many years to send her script to her. Miss Johnson has published three interesting reports on it in our *Proceedings*. The first of these immediately after its publication in 1908 was read by the lady we call Miss Mac. She and her brother had already tried for and obtained automatic writing with a planchette after reading *Human Personality*, but the reading of Miss Johnson's paper on Mrs. Holland seems to have brought them into psychical relation with the S. P. R. group of investigators to whom they were complete strangers. They developed a Sidgwick control, and their script told them to send what they had written to Mrs. Verrall. When they did so interesting cross-correspondences were found.

Mrs. Willett, who knew a little about the work of the Society, also began to write automatically towards the end of 1908, and communicated on the subject with Mrs. Verrall, then a stranger to her; and since



then Mrs. King and Mrs. Wilson have been added to the workers and have contributed to cross-correspondence evidence. . . . To the seven ladies just named, we must add as also concerned with the cross-correspondences, Mrs. Forbes Mrs. Thompson and Mrs. Piper, who were working before 1900."

It must be understood that the automatic script of all these writers contains communications which purport to come from the deceased founders and members of S. P. R., Edmund Gurney, (died 1888) Professor Henry Sidgwick (died 1900). Frederic Myers, (died 1901). Richard Hodgson (died 1905); as well as other deceased persons. Without prejudging the question whether these communications be indeed so derived, it is convenient to write of them as coming from the 'Myers control,' the 'Gurney control,' etc: and to further distinguish them as the 'Holland Myers,' the 'Verrall Myers,' the 'Mac Sidgwick,' to indicate through which automatic scribe the messages come.

Mrs. Holland, (pseudonym, as her family object to Psychical Research), wrote to Miss Johnson on July 2, 1903 from India, saying that she had just finished a careful reading of Mr. Myers' *Human Personality* and had been greatly interested in it on account of various experiences of her own which were akin to some described in the book. She had for instance practised automatic writing since 1893 for her own amusement.

Up to that time, (July 1903) and indeed for years afterwards Mrs. Holland had not seen any of the *Proceedings or Journals* of S. P. R. *Human Personality* was the only book on the subject that she had read; and she knew nothing of the officials or Council of S. P. R. beyond the information concerning them which can be derived from that book: she did not meet Miss Johnson until October 1905.

After further correspondence it was arranged that Mrs. Holland should send her script, as she wrote it, to Miss Johnson: and this was done until April 1904, when Mrs. Holland left India and came to Europe. Mrs. Verrall during the same period sent her script, as has been already mentioned, to Sir Oliver Lodge. Miss Johnson knew very little about Mrs. Verrall's script, and Sir Oliver Lodge knew little or nothing about Mrs. Holland's script. Mrs. Verrall and Mrs. Holland knew nothing about each other's script. Nevertheless, two years later when Miss Johnson for the first time studied Mrs. Verrall's script, she discovered in it certain passages which resembled passages in Mrs. Holland's script of about the same date.

For instance, on Dec. 29, 1903, the Myers control wrote, by the hand of Mrs. Verrall, "Listen to the voice of one crying and proclaiming in desert places." On Jan. 5, 1904, Mrs. Holland wrote, "Words said—shouted—sung to the wind may perhaps reach you sometime." And on Jan. 12, 1904, "Does anything reach you, or am I only wailing as the wind wails—wordless and unheeded."

On Jan. 6, 1904, the Holland-Myers wrote, "The missionary spirit and the great longing to speak to the souls in prison." And on Feb. 2, 1904 the Verrall-Myers wrote, "Slaves in prison (for whom)? the pure have done prodigies."

On Sunday Jan. 17, 1904, the Holland-Myers wrote "Thursday—Jan. 17th, 1901." (The anniversary of the day Mr. Myers died) "I have no wish to return in thought and memory to that time but let that date stand for what it stands for to mine and me—

"Yet another attempt to run the blockade—to strive to get a message through. How am I to make your hand docile enough, how can I convince them?"

"The sealed envelope (1899) is not to be opened yet—*not yet*.

"I am unable to make your hand form Greek characters and so I cannot give the text as I wish—only the reference—I Cor. 16—13." (Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong). "Oh, I am feeble with eagerness—How can I best be identified—It means so much apart from the mere personal love and longing—Edmund's help is not here with me just now—I am trying alone amid unspeakable difficulties—

"We few, we happy few, we band of brothers." (Henry V., Act IV, Scene 3).

"Dear old chap, you have done so much in the past three years—I am cognisant of a great deal of it but with strange gaps in my knowledge—If I could only talk with you—If I could only help you with some advice—I tried more than once did it ever come—There's so much to be learnt from the Diamond Island experiment." (*Miss Johnson notes 'I am unable to conjecture the meaning of this phrase : ' but see below*). "well meaning but very ignorant—bound to be tinged by the channels through which they are conveyed—Help me—give me the help of your belief of your sympathy—Take the message to you all I cannot yet fully and (ending in illegible scribbling)."

Miss Johnson notes:—"The text to which Mrs. Holland's script gives the reference is . . . in Greek over the Gateway of Selwyn College, Cambridge, which would be passed in going from Mr. Myers' house to Mrs. Verrall's, or to the rooms in Newnham College where Professor and Mrs. Sidgwick lived. The Greek inscription over the Selwyn gateway has an error in it on which Mr. Myers had more than once remarked to Mrs. Verrall. The fact that this text turns up in the script again, more than a year

later, and also in connection with Mrs. Verrall, but before Mrs. Holland knew that there was any significance in its first appearance, suggests strongly that it is not a mere chance allusion. Mrs. Holland has never been in Cambridge and has, I believe, few friends or acquaintances having any connection with it."

Mrs. Holland's script for January 27, 1904, contained the following:—(M) "It is impossible for me to know how much of what I send reaches you and how much you are able to set down—I feel as if I had presented my credentials—reiterated the proofs of my identity in a wearisomely frequent manner—but I cannot feel as if I had made any true impression upon them. Surely you sent them—what I strove so to transmit—Your pride if you name a nervous vanity pride was surely not strong enough to weigh against my appeals—Even here even under present conditions I should know I should thrill responsive to any real belief on their part—Oh it is a dark road."

Miss Johnson notes:—"This expression of disappointment at our failure to appreciate and respond to the effort that had been made from the other side is strikingly appropriate to the circumstances. At this time it had not occurred to me to enquire whether any correspondences existed between Mrs. Holland's script and that of Mrs. Verrall, and it was not until October, 1905,—after the series of experiments to be related below,—that I told Mrs. Verrall of the statement in Mrs. Holland's script of Jan. 17, 1904."

Sir Oliver Lodge has referred to the *Diamond Island* script, in the first edition of *The Survival of Man*; but the matter is too important for me to omit it. As will have been seen, in 1907 Miss

Johnson noted that she was unable to conjecture its meaning, but in 1911 she wrote as follows:—

“I stated in a foot-note to this script that I was unable to conjecture the meaning of the phrase ‘Diamond Island experiment’; and Mrs. Holland, who was accustomed to tell me of any facts within her knowledge that could throw light on the script, had made no comment on it. Nor did it convey anything, as far as I could learn, to those who read the *Proceedings*.

On Nov. 24, 1908, Mrs. Holland, being in England, came to see me and told me among other things that she thought this phrase must be an allusion to wireless telegraphy, since Diamond Island (which she believed to be near Diamond Harbour at the mouth of the Hoogli river), had a wireless station on it. Some time later, Mrs. Verrall, hearing of this interpretation, pointed out to me that it followed that the whole of this part of the script was intended to be addressed to Sir Oliver Lodge, and I then perceived that most of the message evidently was intended for him. But on communicating with him on the subject, though he recognised the appropriateness of the general tone and substance of the message, the phrase ‘Diamond Island’ awoke no chord in his memory. He told me, however, that the Lodge-Muirhead system was at work between Burma and the Andaman Island, and he wrote to his friend and partner in this matter, Dr. Alexander Muirhead, F.R.S., on Feb. 24, 1910, to ask:—

‘Do you remember whether any wireless experiments were conducted across the mouth of the Hoogli or anywhere in that neighbourhood? If so, can you name the place? I should rather like to know whether they tested the Andaman installation first at the Hoogli—or wherever it was. They must

have tried it somewhere. Is there a wireless station on the Hoogli do you know?’

Dr. Muirhead replied on Feb. 26, 1910:—‘I believe Mr. Simpson, the man who put up the Andaman Wireless, has been conducting some experiments between a pilot boat and Calcutta. The Andaman circuit is between Diamond Island, at the mouth of the Irrawaddy in Burma, and Port Blair.’

Thus it appears that Mrs. Holland’s conjecture of a connexion between Diamond Island and wireless telegraphy was correct, but that she had located it wrongly, viz., at the mouth of the Hoogli, whereas it is really situated at the mouth of the Irrawaddy, in Burma. From enquiries made with Sir Oliver Lodge’s help, I find that towards the end of August, 1904, operations were begun for establishing wireless telegraph stations at Port Blair and at Diamond Island—preliminary experiments had already been carried on for three months in the early part of 1904, the circuit being in complete working order first on Feb. 10, 1905. Sir Oliver Lodge of course knew of the Burma-Andamans installation, but had entirely forgotten that the Burma end of the installation is on Diamond Island (which is a very small island, not marked on most maps.)

Further inquiries of Mr. Simpson elicited the following:—“In 1903, February, we started out from Calcutta to try to link up Diamond Island with the Andamans. At first we established communications over a short distance—it was not until April, 1904, any actual experimenting was done on Diamond Island.” This was referred to in some Indian newspapers.

Miss Johnson comments:—“The script is remarkably appropriate in several respects as a

message to Sir Oliver Lodge. It was written on Jan. 17, 1904, the third anniversary of Mr. Myers's death, which was also the end of Sir Oliver Lodge's three years' Presidency of the S.P.R. I take the phrase—'you have done so much in the past three years' to refer to this. The tone of affectionate intimacy running through the whole script is also especially appropriate."

Mrs. Holland knew the date of Mr. Myers's death and that Sir Oliver Lodge had been President of the S.P.R. in 1903; but when I asked her if she knew in Jan. 1904, that he was an intimate friend of Mr. Myers's, and that he had been President for three years, she replied:—"I did not realise then that Sir Oliver Lodge was an intimate friend of Mr. Myers's. There were references to him, of course, in *Human Personality*—but I did not know there was a friendship of long standing, and I certainly did not know in January 1904, that he became President of the S.P.R. after Mr. Myers's death. I am surprised to hear that he held it for three years,—I thought it had been for two. It never struck me before that this message was to Sir Oliver Lodge."

It is further significant that, as Sir Oliver Lodge tells me, Mr. Myers had been keenly interested in his work in wireless telegraphy and it was while with Mr. Myers, and stimulated by him, that he devised the fundamental plan for 'tuning' which in some form or other is necessarily used in all systems of wireless telegraphy and was first patented by him in 1897. The term syntony was invented for him by Mr. Myers and Dr. A.T. Myers.

While the script is thus thoroughly characteristic of the relation between Mr. Myers and Sir Oliver Lodge, the fact that it is connected in point of time with the first important cross-correspondence between Mrs.

Holland and Mrs. Verrall—the 'Selwyn text Incident'—seems to lend weight to the supposition that what we may call the 'Diamond Island script' may have been at least partially inspired by the surviving personality of F.W.H. Myers."

Miss Johnson notes:—"The reader who compares the general character of the two scripts (i.e. Mrs. Verrall's script and Mrs. Holland's script), can hardly fail to notice the emotional nature and the note of personal appeal in the utterance of the Holland-Myers, as contrasted with the calmer, more impersonal, and more matter of fact tone of the Verrall-Myers.

The contrast may, of course, represent nothing more than a difference in the automatists' own conceptions of the personality; for, on any reasonable view of the facts, it is I think inevitable that the presentation of the personality should be largely coloured by their normal knowledge of its supposed original.

Still it may be admitted that *if* Mr. Myers really knew what was going on, and *if* he was really concerned in the production of the scripts, it would be natural and appropriate that he should try to impress the two automatists in these different ways. Mrs. Verrall, a personal friend and trained investigator, was already familiar with scientific methods and in close touch with other investigators. She did not require urging to go on with her writing, from which some important evidence had already resulted.

Mrs. Holland on the other hand was in an isolated position; she was conscious of the superficially trivial and incoherent nature of her script, and could not tell whether there was anything in it beyond a dream-like *rechauffé* of her own thoughts. She would naturally shrink from exposing this to strangers and thereby appearing to attach an unreasonable



degree of importance to it. We may suppose then that the control realises her situation, and tries to impress on her a vivid realisation of his own—his intense desire to provide evidence of survival.”

In January, 1906, Mrs. Holland heard of Dr. Hodgson's death, but she knew nothing about his personality or characteristics.

On Feb. 9, 1906, she wrote automatically :—

“Sjdibse Ipehtpo—Only one letter further on—

18	8
9	15
3	4
8	7
1	19
18	15
4	14
---	---

“They are not haphazard figures, read them as letters”—Then followed other matter, partly correct and partly incorrect, in connection with Dr. Hodgson. The note “K. 57.” occurring, without explanation.

Miss Johnson comments :—“On Feb. 21st, 1906, when I saw Mrs. Holland we discussed this script. I found that in spite of the rather obvious hints given in it,—‘Only one letter further on,’ and ‘not haphazard figures read them as letters,’—Mrs. Holland had not deciphered the initial conundrums. The first letters are formed from the name ‘Richard Hodgson’ by substituting for each letter of the name the letter following it in the alphabet; the numbers represent the same name by substituting for each letter the number of its place in the alphabet.

“I asked Mrs. Holland if she had ever played at conundrums of this kind. She told me that as a

child in the nursery she had played at a secret language, made by using either the letter before, or the letter after the real one. But she had never practised or thought of using numbers in this way. She noted afterwards: 'When my hand wrote them I thought they were an addition sum, and I hoped my subliminal self would add it very correctly and quickly. My supraliminal self is *very* poor at figures.'

Mr. Piddington was in America during April and May, 1906, looking through Dr. Hodgson's papers; and a copy of Mrs. Holland's script was sent to him. He wrote on May 25th:—"After the experience gained in the last four weeks, during which I have been going through all R. Hodgson's papers, I have no hesitation in saying that to represent R.H. as communicating his name to a sensitive by means of numbers representing letters, and especially 'sjdibse' etc., is an *extremely* characteristic touch."

Mr. Piddington also mentioned that he had found amongst Dr. Hodgson's papers a note book, referring to "K. 11. K. 52. K. 30," apparently some system of notation of his papers. It will be noted that Mrs. Holland wrote "K. 57," on Feb. 9, 1906, and at once sent her script to Miss Johnson in England. Mr. Piddington did not go to America until the following April, and consequently knew nothing about Dr. Hodgson's note book until after that date. Therefore all possibility of telepathic influence from him to Mrs. Holland is precluded.

The following script, always important evidentially, has recently acquired what I may term emotional interest. All readers of 'Raymond' are well aware of the fatherly interest of Mr. Myers in Raymond Lodge, both before and after his death on Sept. 14, 1915. It will be seen that this special interest

apparently existed nine years before Raymond's death.

On November 7th, 1906, in the middle of a script treating of a variety of topics, Mrs. Holland wrote:—"On the ledge of the squarish—no oblong window is not a safe place for that solution—Of course you cannot consider poisons out of place in a laboratory—but there is not enough locking up—*this* one should be locked up—Towards the end of the room—to your left—an actinic green bottle."

Miss Johnson took this to refer to Sir Oliver Lodge, who is not infrequently mentioned in the script, and it was sent to him for comment, on February 26th, 1907, together with two other slighter and vaguer passages in the script of two later dates. He replied—

"The one on 7 Nov. 1906, about the poison bottle.

"This I find is remarkably correct. My two youngest boys have a laboratory adjacent to the house—not at the college at all—and there they do photography, make explosives, and many other things. The other night when we were all together I asked them whether they had a green bottle of poison in that laboratory, and the elder said yes. It is on the bench, quite accessible, not on the ledge of the oblong window, but near it, and on the left. He says it has stood there nearly all the winter, and is Mercury Chloride which the doctor gave him for a lotion,—not one of their own chemicals. I have told him that it must be either thrown away or locked up. He agrees that it is too accessible, since the younger sisters sometimes enter the same laboratory."

Sir Oliver Lodge did not refer to this script in 'Raymond,' but in reply to a letter from me, he

wrote, April 25, 1917.—“I have looked up the piece of script you mention, in Vol. 24, of the *Proceedings S.P.R.* page 216. It had passed from my memory. But undoubtedly Raymond was one of those boys; and from internal evidence I should certainly say that the communication received by Mrs. Holland was one that purported to come from Myers.”

Jan. 7. 1904, the Holland-Myers write:—“I want to make it thoroughly clear to you all that the eidolon is not the *spirit*—only the simulacrum—If M were to see me sitting at my table or if any of you became conscious of my semblance standing near my chair that would not be *me*. My spirit would be there invisible but perceptive, but the appearance would be merely to call your attention to identify me—It fades and grows less easily recognisable as the years pass and my remembrance of my earthly appearance grows weaker—If you saw me as I am now you would not recognise me in the least—

‘All I could never be—All men refused in me  
This I was worth to God whose wheel the pitcher shaped.’  
(*Browning*).

‘I appear now as I would fain have been—as I desired to be in the very vain dreams of youth—and the time lined, pain lined, suffering face that some of you remember with tenderness is a mere mask now that I strive to conjure up for you to know me by—But my power is weak and you are not really receptive—Remember once again than the phantasm, the so-called ghost, is a counterfeit presentment *projected by the spirit.*”

Miss Johnson comments:—“The theory here expressed as to the true nature of a ‘ghost’ is no

doubt derived from the first part of the chapter on 'Phantasms of the Dead,' in *Human Personality*, Vol. II. But Mrs. Verrall points out to me the rather remarkable use of the words 'eidolon' and 'simulacrum,' which do not occur in that chapter." Mrs. Verrall wrote:—"Eidolon is best represented by our word *phantom*. . . This notion of eidolon has much in common with the Lucretian *simulacra*. While we should not expect this usage to be known by one who was not a classical scholar, it would be likely to be familiar to readers of Homer and Lucretius, and in the quotation from Plotinus in *Human Personality* we have direct proof (if it were wanted) that Mr. Myers knew the passage in the XI *Odyssey*, the *locus classicus* for the special use of eidolon."

It must be noted that Mrs Holland is not a classical scholar, and normally could know nothing about the Greek and Latin words referred to in her script.

Miss Johnson writes:—

"In the passage next to be quoted, the original script shows signs of emotional strain and intensity impossible to reproduce in a printed copy. The Gurney control, writing in pencil, tells the automatist that her hand will be left alone, and she is to write down a message transmitted to her brain. He then tells her to take a pen. She does so and the passage that follows is in her own ordinary handwriting. Then she breaks off, noting 'I am very restless,' etc. The script begins again in the writing of the Myers control, complaining that she is not giving the method of experiment a fair trial. Thus urged she makes a fresh attempt in her ordinary handwriting and gives, not quite correctly, the first lines of Mr.

Myer's poem, St. Paul. (Mrs. Holland told me later that she had never read this poem, and was quite unaware till I told her that she had quoted from it in her script. Nevertheless she supposes as I do, that she had probably seen these lines quoted somewhere, and that she reproduced them from her subliminal memory.) After some general reflections, the handwriting gradually changes again, as if by an overpowering impulse, into that of the Myers control, expressing with passionate energy his desire to 'reach you--reach anyone.' Here the writing becomes large and emphatic, then stops dead, and the Gurney control resumes in pencil, 'Why did you let your hand yield? You have stopped and exhausted him now. . .' The automatist notes that this script has tired her more than any she has ever done. The full text is as follows:

(January 12, 1904.)—(Gurney control)—'Now I want you to do something different this morning. . . your hand will be left alone, but you are to write down as much as you can gather of a message transmitted to your brain alone—I think it will be easier for F. (F. W. H. Myers) Don't trouble to pick phrases—jot down what is put in your mind—Throw it on the paper as it were—that will do—'

(In Mrs. Holland's ordinary handwriting.) 'To believe that the mere act of death enables a spirit to understand the whole mystery of death is as absurd as to imagine that the act of birth enables an infant to understand the whole mystery of life—'

'I am still groping—surmising—conjecturing—The experience is different for each one of us—What I have felt—experienced—undergone, is doubtless utterly unlike what each of you will experience in good time—'

'One was here lately who could not believe that he

was dead—He accepted the new conditions as a certain stage of the treatment of his illness.’

(Mrs. Holland notes, ‘I am very restless—I have just taken an absolutely purposeless walk through two rooms and the verandah—but I could not help it.’)

(Myers control.) ‘Try and fix your attention—you are not giving this a fair trial—I feel that if I am released from my attempts to make your hand write I may be able to send something really convincing—But oh the difficulty of it. Put your left hand at the back of your head and *sit still!*’

There follow in Mrs. Holland’s ordinary handwriting the quotation from the poem, and the general reflections mentioned by Miss Johnson; then—

‘If it were possible for the soul to die back into earth life again I should die from sheer yearning to reach you. (Here the writing changes into that of the Myers control)—to tell you that all we imagined is not half wonderful enough for the truth—that immortality instead of being a beautiful dream is the one, the only reality—the strong golden thread on which all the illusions of all the lives are strung—If I could only reach you—if I could only tell you—I long for power and all that comes to me is an infinite yearning—an infinite pain—Does any of this reach you, reach anyone or am I only wailing as the wind wails—wordless and unheeded?’

Miss Johnson wrote in a paper on Cross-Correspondences in Automatic Writing published in *Proceedings*, 1908:—“The characteristic of these cases—or at least of some of them—is that we do not get in the writing of one automatist anything like a mechanical verbatim reproduction of phrases in the other; we do not even get the same idea expressed different ways,—as might well result from direct telepathy between

them. What we get is a fragmentary utterance in one script, which seems to have no particular point or meaning, and another fragmentary utterance in the other, of an equally pointless character; but when we put the two together, we see that they supplement one another, and that there is apparently one coherent idea underlying both, but only partially expressed in each.

“It occurred to me then, that by this method, if by any, it might be possible to obtain evidence more conclusive than any obtained hitherto, of the action of a third intelligence, external to the minds of both automatists. If we simply find the same idea expressed—even though in different forms—by both of them, it may as I have just said, most easily be explained by telepathy between them; but it is much more difficult to suppose that the telepathic perception of *one* fragment could lead to the production of *another* fragment which can only, after careful comparison, be seen to be related to the first.

“The weakness of all well-authenticated cases of apparent telepathy from the dead is, of course, that they can generally be explained by telepathy from the living. . . . Hitherto the evidence for survival has depended on statements that seem to show the control's recollections of incidents in his past life. It would be useless for him to communicate telepathically anything about his present life, because there would be no proof of the truth of his communication. . . . Evidence for telepathy from the dead . . . has hitherto mainly referred to events in the past. Now telepathy relating to the present, such as we sometimes get between living persons, must be stronger evidentially than telepathy relating to the past, because it is much easier to exclude normal knowledge of events in the present, than of events in the



past. But it has been supposed impossible that we could ever get this kind of evidence for telepathy from the dead; since events in the present are either known to some living person, in which case we could not exclude his telepathic agency; or they are unknown to any living person, in which case it would be difficult or impossible to prove that they had occurred.

“In these cross-correspondences, however, we find apparently telepathy relating to the present,—that is, the corresponding statements are approximately contemporaneous,—and to events in the present which, to all intents and purposes are unknown to any living person, since the meaning and point of her script is often uncomprehended by each automatist until the solution is found through putting the two scripts together. At the same time we have proof of what has occurred in the scripts themselves.

“Now, granted the possibility of communication, it may be supposed that within the last few years a certain group of persons have been trying to communicate with us, who are sufficiently well instructed to know all the objections that reasonable sceptics have urged against all the previous evidence, and sufficiently intelligent to realise to the full all the force of these objections. It may be supposed that these persons have invented a new plan—the plan of cross-correspondences to meet the sceptic’s objections. There is no doubt that the cross-correspondences are a characteristic element in the scripts that we have been collecting in the last few years,—the scripts of Mrs. Verrall, Mrs. Forbes, Mrs. Holland, and, still more recently, Mrs. Piper. And the important point is that the element is a new one.

“We have reason to believe that the idea of making a statement in one script *complementary* of a

statement in another had not occurred to Mr. Myers in his life-time ; for there is no reference to it in any of his written utterances on the subject that I have been able to discover. Also, it seems to me almost certain that if he had thought of it during his life-time, I should have heard of it while helping him in the publication of *Human Personality*, or he would have mentioned it to some other of his friends and colleagues in the S.P.R. Neither did those who have been investigating automatic script since his death invent this plan, if plan it be. It was not the automatists that detected it, but a student of the scripts ; it has every appearance of being an element imported from outside ; it suggests an independent invention, an active intelligence constantly at work in the present, not a mere echo or remnant of individualities of the past."

Miss Johnson then quotes many passages from the scripts which seem to support this theory ; such as, from Mrs. Verrall's script, "But the end is not yet nor here—write only—interpret not—record the bits and when fitted they will make the whole." (Aug. 21, 1904) : and then continues :—

"The question then arises whether the cross-correspondences should be regarded as cases of telepathy between the two automatists—only partially successful ; or cases in which some third agency, external to them both, was endeavouring to produce some rather different result. Assuming that the controls are actually trying to communicate some definite idea by means of two different automatists, whom at the same time they are trying to prevent from communicating telepathically with one another, what the controls have to do is to express the factors of the idea in so veiled a form that each writer indites her own share without understanding it. Yet

the expression must be so definite that, when once the clue is found, no room is left for doubt as to the proper interpretation."

As will have been gathered from Miss Johnson's explanation, above, the subject of cross-correspondences is extremely difficult in itself: it is, however, further complicated by the fact that most of the communications consist of abstruse references to classical authors, occasionally varied by allusions to Dante, and incidents in Italian history.

This in itself affords weighty evidence that the communications are derived from some intelligence external to the scribes, as none of the automatic writers are classical scholars—with the exception of the late Mrs. Verrall; but it makes it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to give the general reader any adequate idea of the point, or the force, of the allusions.

I will however endeavour to render intelligible a series of cross-correspondences which has always appeared to me to be most striking.

First it must be noted that in the autumn of 1906, about the time Miss Johnson first began to discover some cross-correspondences between the scripts of Mrs. Verrall and Mrs. Holland, she and Mr. Piddington decided to give a message in Latin to Myers through Mrs. Piper; that is to say to the Piper-Myers control. The message was given in Latin, because Mrs. Piper is totally ignorant of that language. During the first half of November the English version of the message was composed, it was translated into Latin by Dr. Verrall the latter part of November; and in the middle of December Mr. Piddington began to dictate it to Piper-Myers.

The English version of the message was as follows:—'We are aware of the scheme of cross-

correspondence which you are transmitting through various mediums, and we hope that you will go on with them.

'Try *also* to give to A. and B. two different messages, between which no connection is discernible. Then as soon as possible give to C. a third message which will reveal the hidden connection.' (By 'A.' 'B.' and 'C.' various automatists were suggested). Miss Johnson comments:—"A good deal of ink has been spilt over the secondary question of whether (the Piper-Myers) had enough 'Myers' in him to be able to translate the Latin in which the message was delivered to him. The primary question, of course, was whether 'Myers' understood the purport of the Message and could prove his understanding to us *by producing the kind of cross-correspondence we wanted.*"

I think it should also be noted, that quite apart from the question whether the Piper-Myers understood the Latin Message, there is another possibility, namely that Myers, telepathically or otherwise, might become to some extent aware of the gist of the Message, whilst it was being thought out, and debated by Miss Johnson and Mr. Piddington. In the 'Diamond Island' communication Myers stated, 'I am cognisant of a great deal of (the happenings of the last three years) but with strange gaps in my knowledge.' The possibility therefore must be reckoned with that Myers was 'cognisant' of the purport of the Latin Message whilst it was being composed in November, 1906, before it was formally communicated to the Piper-Myers a month later.

But however that may be, the fact stands that in *November* 1906 a series of cross-correspondences, of the type suggested in the Message, commenced, and was continued at intervals until 1910, without either

Miss Johnson, or any of the automatists who took part, understanding the drift of it: the real meaning not being discovered until July, 1912.

Between the above mentioned dates, (November 1906 and July 1910), the scripts of Mrs. Holland in India, Mrs. Verrall, Miss Verrall, Mrs. Willett, and the Mac family, also certain communications by Mrs. Piper, verbal and written, contained references to *Laurels*; *Laurel wreaths*; *Night and Morning*; *Darkness and Light*; *Library*; *Moorhead*; *Moor's head*; *Alexander's tomb*; and in the later scripts—*Alexander Moors Head*, and the *Laurentian tombs*.

At the time these scripts were written, and for years afterwards, they were either considered to be meaningless, or were misinterpreted. For instance, Miss Verrall assumed the *Alexander* of whom she had written, to be Alexander the Great, as she was unaware that an Alexander de Medici had ever existed. And Miss Johnson interpreted 'Alexander Moors Head' as a reference to Dr. Alexander Muirhead, connected with the Lodge-Muirhead system of wireless telegraphy.

It was not until July 1912 that all these scripts were grouped together and found to contain references, unmistakable when the key was once found, to the Medici; to Lorenzo, whose emblem was the Laurel; to Alexander, known as Il Moro, or the Moor, his mother having been a mulatto slave; to the Medici Library, and the Medici Tombs at Florence—on the tomb of Giuliano de Medici are statues by Michael Angelo representing *Day* and *Night*.

For reasons dealt with at length by Miss Johnson (*Proceedings XXVII*), telepathic influence from a living author seems unlikely, if not impossible. We must therefore choose between attributing the whole

scheme to a series of chance coincidences, and accepting the possibility that Myers was thus carrying out the suggestion made to him in the Latin message.

## CHAPTER VII

### PREMONITIONS AND DEATH WARNINGS

THERE are few people indeed who have not had at one time or other in their lives a premonition which has subsequently proved to be to some extent veridical. Premonitions of death are those most frequently recorded, because from the nature of the case they attract most attention. But it must be noted that premonitions of absolutely trifling events are by no means uncommon. Miss Goodrich Freer, (*Proceedings*, Vol. V) remarks on the considerable proportion of premonitions which 'relate to the arrival of letters, at the time, or soon after, passing through the post.' This of course may be caused by a telepathic impression derived from the person who wrote the letter; but telepathy from an individual will not account for the by no means uncommon case of a premonitory dream of a heading, or paragraph of news, which duly appears in next day's newspaper.

I myself dreamt one night that I saw an unusually worded newspaper heading, giving information which I did not in the least expect. The next morning that identical heading was the first item which caught my eye when I opened the *Daily Telegraph*. A friend of mine dreamt one night that she was standing on a

cliff and saw a ship in distress, which by some means she knew to have sixty or seventy people on board; and she saw life lines being thrown out. This dream she recounted next morning. An evening paper that day contained an account of a shipwreck on the Pacific coast, sixty to seventy people on board, and life lines being used. It in no way concerned my friend; why did she dream about it?

Mr. Myers suggested that such impressions were 'cosmopathic,' which word he coined, defining its meaning to be 'open to the access of supernormal knowledge, apparently from the transcendental world.' Such occurrences are not strictly speaking premonitions. The shipwreck was taking place, or had taken place at the time of my friend's dream; the newspaper heading was being printed, or had been printed at the time of my dream.

This same consideration applies to so-called premonitions of air-raids, which were frequently recorded, and perhaps boasted of, during the war. Although in the early days of the war the general public had little knowledge of the weather conditions etc., which rendered an air-raid probable, from the first a very large number of aeronautic experts in England were well informed as to the number and movements of Zeppelins in Germany, and also, by their expert knowledge could form a very exact idea as to when a raid might be expected to take place.

As a matter of fact the very first Zeppelin raid was accurately foretold by the aircraft correspondent of the *Observer*, who on Jan. 17, 1915, stated that a raid might shortly be expected, 'perhaps this week.' And on Tuesday, Jan. 19, the first air raid took place in Norfolk; the *Observer* correspondent receiving many letters of congratulation on his accurate forecast.

The most that can be claimed for 'premonitions'



of air raids is that they were cosmopathic. But as a matter of fact anyone who read the *Observer*, and other newspapers which devoted space to aeronautics; or who conversed with our airmen, could obtain a very good idea not only on what nights raids might be expected, but also of the hour at which they would commence. I refer to the early days of Zeppelin raids; later on, of course, we were all experts on the subject.

There is no doubt that during the war there was a great deal of pseudo-prophecy. As each week brought fresh horrors, anyone who wished to pose as a prophet needed only to profess undefined melancholy apprehension for a few days, and then claim the next terrible event which happened as a proof of foreknowledge. But ruling out pseudo-premonitions of this type, there remain a large number of well corroborated cases of foreknowledge, which cannot be explained by normally acquired information, or even by telepathy. One explanation of premonitions which has been suggested is that ordinarily our realization of events is deferred till long after they have taken place, (as we hear thunder long after we see the lightning flash, though both are actually simultaneous), but that occasionally this realization is accelerated and is then termed a premonition. To my mind this hardly seems an adequate explanation, particularly in those cases where the premonition actually causes a threatened danger to be averted. For example, a lady, whose little girl was out alone sitting on a favourite seat beneath a railway embankment, was suddenly seized with acute, but undefined anxiety respecting her. A servant was sent to fetch her, and her mother then felt relieved, and told her she might go out again provided she promised not to go back to the same place. An hour or so

later a train fell over the embankment, and crashed on to the exact spot where the child would have been sitting had it not been for her mother's premonition of danger. I fail to see how the theory of deferred realization explains a case like this; and such cases, though uncommon, do occur. I give as examples the two following, taken from the *S. P. R. Journal*, where the full names are given.

Mr. M. wrote on April 17, 1912. "It may be of interest to you to learn that on the 23rd of March I booked my passage to New York on the White Star liner 'Titanic.' About ten days before she sailed I dreamt that I saw her floating on the sea, and her passengers and crew swimming round her. Although I am not given to dreaming at all, I was rather impressed with this dream, but I disclosed it to no one, as my friends, besides my wife and family, knew that I was about to sail on the 'Titanic' and I did not want to cause them any possible uneasiness. The following night, however, I had the very same dream, and I must admit that then I was somewhat uncomfortable about it. Still I said nothing to anyone and had all my trunks packed, business affairs arranged, and in fact had completed all my plans to sail on the 10th instant." Mr. M. explains how he received a cable, suggesting he should postpone his voyage, and continues, "I therefore cancelled my ticket, and then—that is more than a week before the sailing of the 'Titanic'—I told my wife and several friends of the vivid dreams I had had on two consecutive nights. I may mention that previous to cancelling my passage, I felt most depressed and even despondent, but ascribed this feeling to the fact of my having to leave England—homesickness in fact!—I may add that crossing the Atlantic is nothing new to me, as I have crossed a dozen times during the past few years, and

I never remember having any feeling of uneasiness when about to do so, or during the passage."

The above was corroborated, in writing, (dates April 23 and 25, 1912) by two friends to whom Mr. M. had told the dream previous to the sailing of the 'Titanic,' on April 10, 1912. The ship was wrecked on April 14-15, 1912.

Mrs. M. verbally, to Miss Newton, Secretary S. P. R. corroborated all the essential details.

In the above case the business postponement, and not the premonition, seems to have prevented Mr. M. having a share in the fulfilment of his dream: but in the case that follows the premonition itself was the means of averting danger:—

Captain A.B., U.S. Infantry, stated.—“ In January, 1877, I was on leave of absence at Brooklyn, with my two boys, then on vacation from school. I promised the boys that I would take them to the theatre that night, and I engaged seats for us three. At the same time I had the opportunity to examine the interior of the theatre, and I went over it carefully, stage and all. These seats were engaged the previous day, but on the day of the proposed visit it seemed as if a voice within me was constantly saying, 'Do not go to the theatre; take the boys back to school.' I could not keep these words out of my mind; they grew stronger and stronger, and at noon I told my friends and the boys that we could not go to the theatre. My friends remonstrated with me, and said I was cruel to deprive the boys of a promised and unfamiliar pleasure to which they had looked forward, and I partly relented. But all the afternoon the words kept repeating themselves and impressing themselves upon me. That evening less than an hour before the doors opened, I insisted on the boys going to New York with me, and spending

the night at a hotel convenient to the railroad, by which we could start in the early morning. I felt ashamed of the feeling that impelled me to act thus, but there seemed no escape from it. That night the theatre was destroyed by fire with a loss of some 300 lives. Had I been present, from my previous examination of the building, I would certainly have taken my children over the stage, when the fire broke out, in order to escape by a private exit, and would just as certainly have been lost as were all those who trusted to it, for that passage, by an accident, could not be used.

"I have never had a presentiment before or since. I am not in the habit of changing my plans without good reasons, and on this occasion I did so only with the greatest reluctance."

Feb. 1885. Sir W. Barrett wrote:—"I was enabled to see the narrator, who is in active service in the United States Army, and permits me to give his name; the names of other persons who could confirm the narratives were also given to me, but not for publication."

The following account of a premonitory vision was received by S.P.R. from Mr. Alfred Cooper, of 9 Henrietta Street, Cavendish Square. This account was orally confirmed by him to Mr. E. Gurney, June 6th, 1888. It is written by Cooper, but attested also by the Duchess of Hamilton.

"A fortnight before the death of the late Earl of L., in 1882, I called upon the Duke of Hamilton, to see him professionally. After I had finished seeing him we went into the drawing-room, where the Duchess was, and the Duke said to me, "Oh, Cooper; how is the Earl?" The Duchess said, 'What Earl?' and on my answering 'Lord L.' she replied 'That is very odd. I have had a most ex-

traordinary vision. I went to bed, but after being in bed a short time I was not exactly asleep, but thought I saw a scene as if from a play before me. The actors in it were Lord L., in a chair, as if in a fit, with a man standing over him with a red beard. He was by the side of a bath, over which bath a red lamp was distinctly shown.' I then said, 'I am attending Lord L. at present; there is very little the matter with him; he is not going to die; he will be all right very soon.'

"Well he got better for a week and was nearly well, but at the end of six or seven days after this I was called to see him suddenly. He had inflammation of both lungs. I called Sir William Jenner, but in six days he was a dead man. There were two male nurses attending him; one had been taken ill. But when I saw the other the dream of the Duchess was exactly represented. He was standing near a bath over the Earl, and, strange to say, his beard was red. There was the bath, with the red lamp over it. It is rather rare to find a bath with a red lamp over it, and this brought the story to my mind. The vision seen by the Duchess was seen two weeks before the death of Lord L.—

Signed. Mary Hamilton.

Alfred Cooper."

Mr. Myers notes that "an independent and concordant account has been given to me by a gentleman to whom the Duchess related the dream on the morning after its occurrence."

The following dreams, all told in detail before fulfilment, are worth consideration.

Professor N. reported on August 29, 1900, that on that same morning he and his wife had arrived at Sedgwick, Maine, to stay with her parents who had been spending the summer there with their young

son, K. aged 13½. "K. met us at the wharf, and on the way up told us something about being chased by a white horse, but I paid little attention to him. After dinner K. came into the room and said something to his mother—I did not catch the exact words—about his dream of sometime ago, of being chased by a white horse. Great excitement ensued, all began to talk at once. I scented something of value for S.P.R., and succeeded in quieting the confusion. Then I made them tell their stories in due order and took them down in writing."

It appeared that before they went to Sedgwick, K. had a severe nightmare from which his mother woke him, and he then told her that he had dreamt that he was walking on a wharf, and had just passed some people who were getting out of a rowing boat, when he heard warning cries; he glanced over his shoulder and saw a white horse, mouth open, long jaw, about to bite him,—then he sprang into the water,—and woke up to find his mother shaking him."

When K. went to the wharf that day to meet his sister and brother-in-law, all this exactly came to pass; except that instead of jumping into the water when the horse attacked him, he jumped into a gangway which ran from the level of the pier to high water mark. K.'s own account of this fulfilment was corroborated that same day by a man on the wharf, who had seen the occurrence, and who remarked, 'That's a very vicious horse, they shouldn't allow him on the wharf.'

The Rev. R.J., wrote on Aug. 22, 1889, 11.30 p.m. (postmark Courtrai, Aug. 23.) the following in a letter to his wife. "I do hope you will be careful in regard to the house. This morning at two I woke in a dream. I had a frightful idea that the vicarage was being broken into. I thought I was in the L.

and heard the alarm bell ring. I almost determined to write home at once, and ask you to have H.M. to sleep in the house. Had it been possible I should have started for home at once, so fixed was the idea of danger in my mind."

On Aug. 24, a burglary did in fact take place, not at Mr. J's house, but at one near by. Writing the following November, Mr. J. explains, "The substance of the dream was that a burglary had been, or was being committed, and that the persons concerned in it were to my knowledge in some fields at the back of the house where the real burglary occurred, and that the alarm bell was ringing at the Hall. Then my *thoughts* (distinguishing dream from conscious thought) went naturally to my own home, and I *thought*, still sleepy, that the dream was intended to be a presentiment of mischief to my home." A statement from the village policeman gives the time of the burglary as being "between the hours of 11 p.m. (Aug. 23.) and 6 a.m. Aug. 24, 1889."

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Mrs. Stella, Chieri, Italy, writes:—"The following occurred to my mother, the most matter of fact person, and not one to be easily impressed. About three years ago, I received a telegram from her, from London, saying, "Take care of the plate; will write and explain." I did not understand what she meant, but, nevertheless, I took extra precautions in shutting up the house at night, and awaited my mother's letter. It appears she had dreamed that she had been roused from her sleep by a noise, that she had got up to see what it was, and went out on to the staircase, and on looking down she saw our dining-room, here in Italy, and a man was filling a bag with the plate, which another man was handing to him from

the sideboard. She heard one man say to the other, in Italian, 'To-morrow we will go to Genoa and spend Sunday,' (that making it Friday that they were robbing us). One of the men, looking up suddenly, saw my mother, and began mounting the stairs with a long knife in his hand, and the fright woke my mother. But the impression was so vivid that she sent me a telegram the next morning (Thursday), being quite sure that our house would be robbed on the Friday night. It was not, however; but the following Wednesday a band of robbers broke into the house nearest to us and carried off everything, but they were taken the next day, when they confessed that they intended on the Friday to rob our house, and then go to Genoa. Among the things taken with them were a bag and a long knife, answering to the ones my mother described. My mother has great common sense, and held until then all superstitious presentiments and belief in dreams to be really wrong, yet on this occasion her dream was so clear that she not only acted in contradiction of all her previous opinions, but even thought it sufficiently urgent to necessitate a telegram."

Pro. V.

Mrs. Mackenzie, Lamington House, Tain, Ross-shire, writes:—"One morning last spring, when at breakfast, I suddenly remembered a dream I had had the night before, and told it to my house party who numbered ten individuals. I should say it was rather a joke against me that I believed in dreams and that very often my dreams came true; so when I mentioned having had a curious dream, I was greeted with the usual joking remarks. 'Well,' said I, 'this is what I dreamt. I thought there were



several people in our drawing-room, among others Mr. J., and I left the room for a few minutes to see if supper was ready, and when I came back to the drawing-room I found the carpet, which was a new one, all covered with black spots. I was very angry, and when Mr. J. said it was ink stains, I retorted, 'Don't say so, I know it has been burnt.' And I counted five patches. So ends the dream.' Well, we all went to church, it being Sunday, and on our return Mr. J. came with us for luncheon, a thing he had never done before, and some others joined our party. I went into the dining-room to see if things were ready, and then going back into the drawing-room I noticed a spot near the door, and asked who had been in with dirty feet; being a new carpet I was particular. Mr. J. as in my dream, said it was surely ink, and then pointed out some more spots, when I called out, 'Oh, my dream! my dream! my new carpet! Burnt.' As we afterwards discovered the housemaid had allowed the fire to go out, and had carried in live coal from another room in the shovel, which she had tilted against the door, and spilt the coal on the carpet, burning *five* holes."

Corroborated by Miss Mackenzie.

The next case is difficult to classify; it is uncertain whether it was a dream or a vision; and it includes a clairvoyant impression of a contemporary event, the dog being led home by the porter; and a premonitory impression of an incident which took place nearly an hour later—the porter telling Mrs. B., "Your dog is found."

Miss — after describing how her friend Mrs. B. lost her favourite dog Barrie, whilst travelling by railway, after the family had removed from the north, to the east of England; goes on to say:—"The days passed by, and we never failed to include the station in

our daily walk, always with the same question on our lips, 'Any news of Mrs. B.'s dog?' but a favourable reply never came.

"On Friday of the same week we arranged to visit Cambridge and to spend several hours in that most interesting town. On the return journey, being very tired, most complete was the silence which fell upon us. As far as I can remember, no one had mentioned Barrie's name since the usual inquiry had been made in the morning, and indeed as a week had now elapsed since his loss we were beginning to give up the hope of recovering him.

"Like all the rest I was in a semi-sleeping condition. I do not say asleep, for then what follows would be a dream, and certainly it was scarcely that—no, merely a tired condition of mind and body. I felt that peculiar sensation, which I am sure has been felt by many, that is, that though sufficiently awake to know all that is going on around, still your real mind seems to be far away and almost separate from your surroundings. It seemed to me that I was walking down a road, and before me I could see quite plainly the collie dog of which we had spoken and thought so much, being led by a man who held him by a rope. I followed him with interest until he was taken up to a door which I saw opened, and the flood of light within showed me the well-known form of Mrs. B.'s maid-servant. It all appeared to me so vivid that I suddenly started up and said to Mrs. B. 'Edith, Barrie is found.' Everyone was taken aback by the suddenness of this statement, and Mrs. B. laughingly said, 'Nonsense, how can you possibly know, and why raise false hopes in my mind?' I was then quite awake, and looking most intently at her, replied, 'Yes, he is found, and when we arrive at — station the first thing to happen will be that a

porter will come up and say, 'Mrs. B. your dog is found.' Then I went on describing the scene of which I had just imagined myself to be a witness, saying, 'Ah, there I see him going down the road. Now the maid is opening the door.' Here there was a universal laugh, and at last I joined in it, whereat all visions vanished. Still I maintained my opinion that the collie was safe; and when Dr. B. remarked that if all happened as I said I should have a pair of gloves, I agreed, and promised him a pair if Barrie should prove still to be missing.

"In about forty minutes after this the train drew up at — station, and Dr. B. opened the door and stepped out, just as he was giving his hand to Edith, a porter came up to her, and said, 'Mrs. B. your dog is found.' She exclaimed, 'Where is he?' The man replied by whistling to a fellow porter, who brought the dog from the other end of the platform, and Barrie was soon overwhelming his mistress with rather boisterous caresses. On our way home, Dr. B. remarked I was only entitled to *one* glove, as the scene I had so graphically described of the dog being led down the road, was a myth. But on our arrival at the house, our first greeting from the maid was, 'Oh, it really is your dog, Mrs. B.; I would not take him in when the porter brought him about three-quarters of an hour ago.' I was paid the bet."

The incident happened in April 1884, and the above account was written some weeks later.

Dr. and Mrs. B. added to the account a corroborative note, signed by both of them, to the following effect:—  
"Without accepting any psychical theory whatever as bearing upon the subject, we can state that the above mentioned facts have been, to the best of our recollection, quite correctly recorded."

There are certain well known types of death

warnings ; I say *well known* advisedly, because there are few people indeed who have not in the course of their lives come across such cases at first hand. Knocks as of a heavy mallet on wood are probably most frequently recorded ; but the scream of the Banshee, and the sound of a carriage or coach driving up to the front door are traditional in many families, and well-authenticated instances are not uncommon.

Victor Hugo, in his Diary, (published in 1900), records an instance of knocks preceding a death, combined with a curious series of coincidences connected with the unlucky number thirteen.

The first entry is :—

“ 22, December, 1870. Leopold sent me thirteen fresh eggs.”

“ 5, January, 1871. We were thirteen at table.”

“ 12, January, 1871. We were thirteen again. Dinner cost 13 francs per person.”

(They then left Paris for Bordeaux. Subsequently Mme. Hugo remarked, ‘ The number thirteen haunts us. Every Thursday in January we were thirteen at table. We left Paris on the 13th of February. We were thirteen in the saloon carriage. We are staying at 13 Rue Saint-Maur.’)

“ 13, March, 1871. This night I could not sleep, I meditated on numbers, which was the subject of Pythagoras’ reveries. I was thinking of all these thirteens oddly grouped and mingled with what we have been doing since the 1st January ; and I was saying to myself as well, that I should leave this house where I am on the 13th of March. At this instant the some nocturnal knocking that I have already heard twice before in this room, (three blows like blows of a hammer on a board), was produced quite close to me.”

(On that same March 13th, Charles Hugo, Victor

Hugo's son, died suddenly and quite unexpectedly, in a fit of apoplexy.)

"14, March, 1871. I read over what I wrote on the morning of the 13th, about this knocking heard at night."

Mr. Myers, (S.P.R. *Proceedings* XI.) gives particulars of an interesting series of death warnings which I give here in a slightly abridged form.

"In several families there is a tradition that some special sign precedes or accompanies the transition of the head of the house, or of certain of its members. In the case of one of these families I have received evidence to the persistence of a given type of 'warning' during a period of three centuries."

Extract from Dr. Robert Plot's 'Natural History of Oxfordshire.' Ed. 1677. I. "I must add also a relation, as strange as it is true, of the family of one Captain Wood, late of Bampton, Oxfordshire, now of Brise Norton. Some whereof before their death have had warning given them by a certain knocking, either at the door without, or on table or shelves within; the number of *stroaks* and distance between them, and the place where, for the most part respecting the circumstances of the persons to dye, or their deaths themselves." Dr. Plot then recounts with much detail how Mrs. Elenor Wood in 1661 heard a knocking upon the door, apparently an *outside* door; and a fortnight later her son-in-law died *in London*.

II. About three years later *three* great knocks were heard *inside* the house by Mrs. Elenor Wood, her son Mr. Basil Wood and his wife; and by several servants. Within little more than six months, *three* of the family died *in the house*.

III. In August 1674, Mr. Basil Wood junior, his wife, and her father and sister, heard 'upon a table

in their chamber, as they stood by it, *two* several knocks struck, as it were with a cudgel.' Two deaths took place within the year.

IV. Mr. Charles H. L. Woodd noted in the margin of his copy of Dr. Plot's book, "The said warning was heard at the death of Mr. George Woodd, of Richmond, Surrey. A knocking was heard by Mrs. Woodd the night he died. He said 'Oh, it is the Woodd's warning, I shall die before morning.' He did so. March 11, 1784."

V. Basil George Woodd died at Hillfield, Hampstead, August 28th, 1872, aged 91 years. Hannah Wardman, an old servant, living in his own house, at Harrogate, Yorkshire, heard knocks *outside* the front door the night he died away from home at Hampstead. She got up, and went down in the middle of the night, opened the door and looked round; but no one was to be seen. Mr. Gleave, the butler, also heard knocks at the pantry window; and the dog howled piteously. One of the men in the garden remarked, "The old master will soon be gone and the dog knows it." Hannah Wardman had never heard of the family superstition.

VI. Mr. Charles H. L. Woodd died December 15th, 1893, between 8 and 9 a.m. His son the Rev. Trevor Basil Woodd related, "On Thursday evening, Dec. 14th, 1893, after church I was sitting before my fire. I knew my father was ill, and had a presentiment that he was dangerously ill. As I sat, I distinctly heard three knocks, perhaps more, like the sound of someone emptying a tobacco pipe upon the bars of my fire grate." Mrs. Dumbell, daughter of Mr. C. H. L. Wood, also heard knockings three times on the day before her father died.

VII. Basil Thomas Woodd died June 4th, 1895, 10.30 p.m. His two daughters, one being at West

Kensington, and the other at Hampstead, heard knockings on the previous day, June 3rd. They were not in the least anxious about their father, who appeared to be in his usual health; until suddenly seized with a fit of apoplexy, dying a few hours afterwards. Two nieces also heard knocks shortly before their uncle's death, and mentioned the fact before they heard he had been taken ill.

Mr. Myers commented on the above, "Can it be possible that when communication of this sort has been found feasible by some group on the other side, there is a continuity of effort to sustain it?—or that each decedent in succession finds in the previous history a suggestion to attempt a similar message himself?—or that there is in the family a hereditary aptitude for the same type of percipience?"\*

An incident—apparently a death warning—in which sight as well as sound came into play, is the following:—

\*Since Mr. Myers published the account of the Woodd warnings, the warning has been heard once again.

The Rev. T. B. Woodd has sent the following report to the Society for Psychical Research:—"On Monday, October 20th, 1919, at about 9.30 p.m., I was walking upstairs and I heard a strange knocking outside the house (S. John's Vicarage, Fitzroy Square.) I called my servant, Cyril Cooke, and asked him whether he heard it and what it was. He could not say. I said, 'It is the Woodd knocking. Someone is going to die.' On Wednesday, Oct. 22nd, I was called by telegram to see my cousin, Miss Katherine Isabella Basil Woodd, as she was very ill. (I had written that very day inviting myself to lunch on the following Saturday, not knowing she was unwell.) She died at 7.30 next morning, Oct. 23rd. My servant reported what I had said to my housekeeper, Lydia Wilkins. I did not remember it again until Saturday the 25th. Cyril Cooke had never heard of the family superstition and rather laughingly told my housekeeper I thought someone would die. Trevor Basil Woodd, Oct. 30th, 1919."

Letter from the Rev. Edward T. Vaughan, Langleybury Vicarage, King's Langley, August 25, 1884. "Some three or four years back, I had occasion to visit a parishioner who was seriously ill, one afternoon in the winter time when it was growing dark. I had seen him several times before since his illness commenced, and had always found him in the same bedroom. On this occasion I had been praying with him, and his wife was kneeling at the opposite side of the bed to myself. As I was saying the last words of the prayer, we (the woman and myself) distinctly saw a small table, which stood about a yard from the foot of the bed, rise two or three inches from the ground and come down with a violent thump upon the floor, so loudly that the man, who was lying with his eyes closed, started up and asked, with some terror, what had occasioned it. On examining the table, I found that a glass with medicine in it, which stood on the table with several other articles, had been so shaken that some of the contents were spilt. My first idea was that something had been thrown down in the room below, where my wife, a sister of the woman's, and an aged uncle were sitting. On going downstairs and inquiring, I found that this was not so; that they had been sitting perfectly quiet in the room, and thought *we* had thrown down something in the bedroom. There was no one else in the house. The man died about a week after this took place. I add my name as you wish to show this to others. E. T. Vaughan, Vicar of Langleybury."

On further inquiries being made four years later, Mrs. Vaughan wrote on June 27, 1888, as follows:—"In confirmation of the story of Wilson's death-bed, I can say I was sitting in the room below the sick man's with two other people, (his sister-in-law and



uncle), in perfect silence, as every word read in the room above could be distinctly heard by us. Just as the last words of the prayer were being said, we were startled by a loud and sudden noise, as if some heavy piece of furniture had fallen in the room above. My first impression was that the man was taken worse, and that his wife, moving hastily to him, had knocked over a table. None of us spoke, though we started and looked at each other, and expected to hear someone called; but almost the next minute I heard Mr. Vaughan address the man on leaving, and come downstairs with the wife. I went to meet them with her sister, and though nothing more was said by any of us than 'good-bye,' I saw by all the faces that something unusual had happened. As soon as we were out of the house I said to Mr. Vaughan, 'What *was* that noise just as you were reading the prayers?' and he told me the story you have heard, and it formed the principal topic of our long walk home, wondering what it was, and trying to explain it, without in the least coming to any conclusion but greater wonder. E. L. Vaughan."

Mr. Myers commented, "This is a brief and simple incident; but it is particularly hard to explain by ordinary causes—such as an earthquake, or a mistaken memory."

In Mrs Henry Sidgwick's article on *Premonitions*, (Prov. V.) instances are given of the wailing sounds preceding a death, which in Ireland are attributed to a Banshee.

Mrs Levey, 7 Castle Terrace, Haverfordwest, wrote:—"On the night of 27th November, 1836, my mother lay dying, at 9 o'clock, on a night of great rain. There came a fearful wail of a woman's voice swaying to and fro past the windows. I ran to the window, but no human being could be there, as the

room was two pair stairs up, and no houses near. She died at half past ten.

“On the evening of the 9th of August, 1844, my two sisters and self were sitting together, when a fearful cry came from the street. We ran to the window—no one was to be seen—no house near—a moonlight night. Our eldest brother, a doctor, died very suddenly on the 10th.

“My father and family sat at dinner on the evening of the 4th February, 1848. The same fearful cry or wail filled our house. I mentally said ‘If that happened in the country, they would say someone at the table would die.’ My youngest brother, 23, died quite suddenly at 8 o’clock, on the morning of the 5th.

“Same occurrence upon my father’s death in 1867. Same at the death of a sister in 1869. Same at death of next brother, a doctor of medicine, in 1870.

“I had just awoke, about 4 o’clock in the morning, in the month of June, 1877. I was horrified to hear, (as I thought), my four young nieces on the stairs crying in the most fearful manner. I got up to light a candle, as the room was dark, but opened my door, and to my surprise, no person was there, and it was broad daylight. All the inmates of the house were asleep. Soon after, on the 20th June, a letter came from the captain of the ship my young nephew was coming from Canada in, to say that three young men fell overboard in a storm; two were saved, but my nephew lost. Upon this occasion the house dog howled in a most fearful manner, and was found crouched down, hair on end, in the coal cellar. . . . I felt, having heard it so many times, it must be what we call in Ireland ‘The Banshee.’ I may remark that upon the deaths of the three who died suddenly, it was more fearful than any.”

Two sisters, Mrs Treloar, and Mrs Gardiner, gave accounts of a wailing sound which preceded the deaths of both their father and mother. Mrs Treloar thus describes the former instance:—"At between 1 and 2 o'clock we were all asleep, when the most extraordinary sound woke the household. I got up, lit my candle, went past my sister's room and found her up also. The sound as I went there seemed to rush past me, and was like an awful howling followed by shriek upon shriek, accompanied by what seemed a strong wind, although everything out of doors was perfectly still. My sister and I rushed to my brother's room, and found him up; the three servants also were coming down the stairs from the top of the house. The cook burst into tears and said, 'Oh, the master! That is his warning.' The sound was still continuing. We went into my father's room, and found him sleeping most peacefully."

Another type of warning, popularly supposed to precede a death, is the sound, or sometimes the sight of a carriage, or coach and four, driving by or near the house in which the death takes place. An instance of a funeral being seen, where no funeral apparently was, is given by Mrs Sidgwick:—The Rev. P. A. L. Wood, Rector of Newent, Gloucestershire, sent the following, written by a Miss H., who was known to him. "My mother and I were once driving in Somersetshire with an old lady of nearly 80 years of age. She suddenly called to the servants to stop the carriage and draw up to the side of the road, which was done, though we wondered at such an unaccountable order. 'Now you can go on,' she said presently, and added, turning to my mother, 'I always like to stop while a funeral is passing.' The road was a long straight one, and quite empty of

even a foot-passenger, so we laughed at the old lady, and told her so ; and she repeated, ' Well, it is very odd, I certainly thought I saw one. How foolish the servants must have thought me.' The next day occurred the perfectly sudden death of her most intimate friend and nearest neighbour—an old gentleman who used to read to her every day."

In answer to questions Miss H. wrote:—"The drive took place about four o'clock in the afternoon on a fine bright day. We were staying at Weston-super-Mare, where the old lady and gentleman lived, so I heard of his death myself from the old lady's daughter, the day after it happened. She reminded me and my mother then of the old lady's idea the day before."

I have not discovered any well-authenticated instance of the death-watch warning, but the following series of incidents presents points of similarity. It is a most praiseworthy custom of members of the S.P.R. to send particulars of any apparently supernatural occurrence, immediately, by post to some member of the Council, so that, if it eventually prove to be veridical, the date of the postmark may afford unimpeachable evidence as to its date. In this case the postmark, Sept. 20, on the envelope of Mrs Verrall's letter, affords proof that the 'ticking' occurred two days before the misfortune it appears to have foretold.

"5 Selwyn Gardens, Cambridge, September 20, 1898. 3 p.m.—Dear Mr Myers, Just a line for the stamp of the post,—in case anything has 'occurred,'—to say that this afternoon, at 2.30, I heard the curious ticking which I think I have mentioned to you. It comes usually, if not always, when I am lying down, and may be due to some physical cause ; but it has at least once been associated with the

illness of a friend, so I make a point of noting it, and I suppose the stamp of the post is desirable. But *absit omen*. M. de G. Verrall."

Forty hours subsequently, on September 22, Mrs. Verrall's sister, when landing from a steamer, made a false step, and fell into the water, 'it was very nearly drowning. The great danger was being sucked beneath the ship.'

Writing on November 11, 1899, Mrs. Verrall summarised the occasions when she had heard this ticking as follows:—"In 1888 the ticking persisted, at irregular intervals, for three weeks, at a time when there was great anxiety among the members of my household, unknown to me, concerning the health of a child. The ticking ceased when I was made aware of the precarious condition of the child.

"In 1891, for three or four months, the ticking was heard by me at irregular intervals, but desisted after the occurrence of a death.

"In July, 1892, I heard and recorded the ticking, as described in the *Journal* for November, on the night on which a friend was taken seriously ill.

"In September, 1898, I heard and recorded the ticking, thirty-two hours before the alarming accident to my sister, described in the *Journal*.

"On no other occasion have I heard it. I did once hear a death-watch when I was very young. The sound made by the death-watch is louder and more regular than the 'ticking'; I am certain that the sound which I have been describing is not made by a beetle, nor by any clock or watch." Mrs. Verrall suggested that "it seemed that in some cases mental disturbance, anxiety, or alarm, too indefinite to be recognised by the consciousness, may manifest itself in this form of hallucination, and thus the idea of

impending misfortune might become associated with a ticking sound:”—as that of the death-watch.

After considering the subject of premonitions of ordinary or trifling events, and of death warnings, I would say that the former seem to me to be far more inexplicable than the latter. The tremendous event of passing over may well be known beforehand by those on the other side, and they by certain phenomena may seek to prepare friends on earth. I do not assert this is so, I merely say it is possible.

But how can we explain a premonitory dream of the burning of holes on a new carpet? Yet we have satisfactory evidence that such a dream occurred.

Sir Oliver Lodge remarks,—“Prognostication can hardly be part of the evidence for survival, the two things are not essential to each other, they hardly appear to be connected.” And yet the fact remains that prognostications are inextricably intermingled with every type of psychical phenomena. In this book instances of premonition are to be found under the heads of Clairvoyance, Crystal-gazing, Mediums, and Hallucinations.

In considering whether a medium's powers are genuinely supernormal, or merely fraudulent, prevision affords an almost infallible test. It is difficult to be certain that knowledge of a past event has not been acquired by normal means: but when a medium foretells an event, or a series of events, which could hardly have been anticipated by any process of ordinary inference, strong evidence is afforded that the medium possesses supernormal powers. In this connection the following case is interesting: it is given in a recent issue of the *S.P.R. Journal*. Capt. 'X' R.E. states:—

“In August 1913, I met a Belgian lady, a native of Brussels, at the house of some mutual friends.

This lady was reputed to have had some remarkable successes in forecasting events concerning her friends and acquaintances. On this occasion she made the following statements with regard to myself.

“First, that in November of the same year, I should meet and become engaged to a lady whom she described.

“Secondly, that in January 1915 I should become an officer in the British Army on account of a war with Germany.

“Thirdly, that I should be married shortly after I became an officer.

“Fourthly, that I should come to France ‘to fight the Germans’ in November, 1916.

“Being very sceptical of this sort of thing I noted the above statements in my diary at the time.

“All of them subsequently proved to be correct in practice. That is to say:—

“First, in November 1913, I met and became engaged to a lady answering closely to the description given. This lady was entirely unknown either to me or to the Belgian lady in August 1913.

“Secondly, I was gazetted to a commission in January 1915.

“Thirdly, I was married in August 1915.

“Fourthly, I came out to France in November 1916.”

## CHAPTER VIII

### HALLUCINATIONS

THE late Professor Henry Sidgwick, explaining the use of the word *Hallucination*, wrote:—"We require some one general term, and the best we can find to include all the species is 'Hallucination.' I admit the word to be open to some objection, because some people naturally understand from it that the impression so described is entirely false and morbid. But I need not say . . . that this is not our view." (*i.e.* not the view of the S.P.R.) "Many of these experiences—though doubtless they all involve some disturbance of the normal action of the nervous system—have no traceable connection with disease of any kind: and a certain number are, as we hold, reasonably regarded as 'veridical' or truth-telling; they imply in the percipient a capacity above the normal, of receiving knowledge under certain rare conditions.

"Why then, it may be asked, do we use a term that implies erroneous and illusory belief? I answer, first, because in every experience that we call a Hallucination there is an element of erroneous belief, though it may be only momentary, and though it may be the means of communicating a truth that could not otherwise have been known. If I seem to



see the form of a friend pass through my room, I must have momentarily the false belief that his physical organism is occupying a portion of the space of my room, though a moment's reflection may convince me that this is not so, and though I may immediately draw the inference that he is passing through a crisis of life some miles off, and this inference may turn out to be true. . . The word 'apparition' is no doubt a neutral word that might be used of all visual experiences of this kind, but it could only be used of visual cases. Usage would not allow us to apply it to apparent sounds, or apparent touches. I think then, that we must use 'hallucinations of the senses' as a general term. . . meaning simply to denote by it a sensory effect, which we cannot attribute to any external physical cause of the kind which would ordinarily produce this effect."

Apparitions of dying or deceased persons, to friends and relatives at a distance, have been recorded so frequently, and with such a weight of evidence, that few people doubt their veridity. But it is not as commonly realised that apparitions of living persons are also seen, sometimes as a result of deliberate effort on the part of the person who appears; sometimes when that person has no consciousness in the matter. Various experiments in this direction have been reported by S.P.R. from time to time: I quote the following; substituting pseudonyms for real names.

"The agent, Miss Vaughan stated,—'One night in September 1888 I was lying awake in bed reading. I had recently been studying with interest various cases of astral projection in *Phantasms of the Living*, and I distinctly remember making up my mind that night to try whether I could manage to accomplish

a projection of myself by force of will-concentration. The room next to mine was occupied by a friend of mine, Miss Jackson, who was not at all of an excitable turn of mind. . . . That night I perfectly recall lying back on my pillow with a resolute but half doubtful and amused determination to make Miss Jackson see me. . . . After a few minutes I felt dizzy, and only half conscious. I don't know how long this state lasted, but I do remember emerging from it into a conscious state, and thinking I had better leave off, as the strain had exhausted me. I gave up, and changing into an easy position I thought I had failed and needlessly fatigued myself for an impossible fancy. I blew out my candle; at the instant I was startled by hearing an indistinct sound, which was repeated, and then there was silence. Soon after my clock struck 2 a.m.

"Next morning Miss Jackson said 'Had I gone into her room to frighten her during the night?' She declared I seemed to come to her and bend over her. From what she said I concluded it must have been between 1 and 2 a.m. . . . I was in my ordinary state of health, and not at all excited, but merely bent on trying an experiment."

The Percipient's account, dated 1889, is—"During the summer of 1888 I was staying with the Miss Vaughans. We had been discussing the phenomena of people leaving their bodies, and appearing in their astral forms. . . . I was perfectly wide awake, when suddenly I saw Miss Vaughan standing by my bedside in her ordinary dressing gown. The moonlight came in at the window sufficiently for me to distinguish her face clearly, and her figure partially. I sat up in bed, and said, rather crossly, 'What do you want here, Alice?' As she didn't answer, I immediately struck a light

and she was gone. I may have spoken sufficiently loudly to be heard in the next room." This case if it stood alone could hardly be considered conclusive, as several normal explanations suggest themselves as possible, though not particularly probable.

The following case was sent by Dr. M. L. Holbrook to Dr. Hodgson, with this comment, "I think the enclosed case is a very good one. I have known of it for years. . . The son's testimony was written out without any consultation with his parents, or knowledge of what they had said."

The following is the account of the agent, Mr. Fosbrook. (pseudonym, real name and address given in *S.P.R. Journal*.) "June 12, 1894. On the 5th of July, 1887, I left my home to go to New York to spend a few days. My wife was not feeling well when I left, and after I had started, I looked back and saw her standing at the door, looking disconsolate and sad at my leaving. The picture haunted me all day, and at night before I went to bed, I thought I would try to find out if possible her condition. I undressed, and was sitting on the edge of the bed when I covered my face with my hands, and willed myself at home to see if I could see her. After a little, I seemed to be standing in her room, before the bed, and saw her lying there looking much better. I felt satisfied she was better, and so spent the week more comfortably regarding her condition. On Saturday I went home. When she saw me she remarked, 'I don't know whether I am glad to see you or not, for I thought something had happened to you. I saw you standing in front of the bed the night of the day you left, as plain as could be, and I have been worrying myself about you ever since. I sent to

the office and to the depot daily to get some message from you.' ”

Mrs. Fosbrook wrote:—“I remember this experience well. I saw him as plain as if he had been there in person. I did not see him in his night clothes, but in a suit that hung in the closet at home. It made me very anxious, for I felt that some accident or other had befallen him. I was on the rack all the time till Saturday, and if he had not come home then, I should have sent to him to find out if anything was wrong.”

The son, Mr. Edward Fosbrook, wrote:—“At the time in question I was living at S. going to and from my work, and stabling my horse at father's. I do not remember the date, but think it was about the middle of the week, that mother told me in the morning that ‘she had seen father the night before, just before she retired for the night. His face was drawn and set as if he were either dead, or trying to accomplish something that was beyond him.’ She watched very anxiously the balance of the week for a letter or telegram, but none came, and when no word came on Saturday she was almost crazy. He unexpectedly returned Saturday night . . . When mother questioned him as to the incident at the middle of the week, he said ‘that he made up his mind to see her that night if possible, and had concentrated his will power on that one object,’ with the result which you know. It gave him pleasure, and her a great deal of uneasiness.”

An account of an oral hallucination vouched for by five people, was sent to S.P.R. by the late Mr. Andrew Lang, the ladies concerned being friends of his. The names are given in the *Journal*, but I have substituted pseudonyms.

Miss Joan Snow wrote,—“On Friday night, Dec.

11, about 11 p.m., I was writing in my bedroom—the first room at the top of the staircase, which is a low one. The house was quite quiet, and I fancied the servants had gone to bed, so that I was surprised to hear footsteps coming along the passage downstairs. I heard the steps come from the hall, past the foot of the staircase, and along the passage known as the nursery lobby. There they died away, and I heard no more. It was rather a quick decided step, accompanied by the rustle of a silk dress, and was so exactly like my mother's, that if I had not known her to be in Edinburgh, ill, at the time, I should not have had two doubts about it. I wondered which of the servants it could possibly be, thought I would ask in the morning, and went on writing. In a few minutes there was a knock at my door, and I opened it to find three scared and white-faced maids. They asked me if I had been downstairs, and looked more scared than ever when I said 'No.' They then asked if I had heard steps, and when I said 'Yes, they sounded exactly like Mrs. Snow's,' they told me they had heard them as they sat in the kitchen, had gone to look in the hall and passage, and had seen no one. They then went to the (old) nursery, the room to which the passage where the steps were heard led, and asked my sister, whose bedroom it was, if she had left the room. She said No, but she had heard the steps. It was quite evident they thought that they had heard a ghost, and as my mother was rather seriously ill at the time, of course they concluded it was hers. We did not discuss the matter however, and I suggested burglars, took my poker, and went with them in a procession all over the house."

The narrative of the cook, attested by the parlourmaid and housemaid, is as follows:—"On Friday

night December 11th, 1896, about 11 p.m. we were all sitting by the fire in the kitchen. We heard steps in the passage coming from the hall, and going along by the nursery door. The housemaid, looked up and asked if I heard anything. I said, 'Yes, I thought I heard Mrs. Snow walking along with her skirts rustling, from the front door along by the nursery.' We had all heard it. I said I thought it was like a warning, and I said, 'I hope Mrs. Snow is not dead.' Then we rose and went to the door leading from the kitchen to the nursery passage, but saw nothing. Miss Cecily heard our steps, and came out, and asked what on earth was the matter. Miss Cecily said she heard it too, and thought it was one of us. Then we went upstairs to Miss Joan's room. She had heard it, and said she hoped there were no burglars about. We went all over the house and looked everywhere, but there was nothing to be seen. We then went to bed, and have never heard it again. We all thought Mrs. Snow must be dead."

Miss Cecily Snow also corroborated the above statements, which were dated December, 17th, 1897; just one year after the occurrence described took place.

Unlike most cases of the sort, we have in this instance a statement by the supposed ghost; Mrs. Snow describes her own experience as follows:—

"On Thursday, December 10th 1896, while visiting my niece in Edinburgh, I was seized with an acute attack of laryngitis. The evening of the next day, Friday, about 11 p.m. I had such a sensation of being suffocated that I felt as if I were dying, and would never see my home again. I was suddenly filled with an overpowering longing to be at home, and whether I fell asleep for a few moments and dreamed, I do not know; but it seemed the next

minute as if my desire were granted, and I felt I was really there. I was conscious of walking along the passage past the dressing-room door, and towards the room we call the nursery ; but I had hardly time to realise my own joy and relief when I found myself still lying in bed, and the feeling of suffocation from which I had had such a happy respite for a few moments, again tormenting me. When I returned home a week later I was told of the curious occurrence on the evening of Friday, December 11."

It has always appeared to me that this case has not received as much attention as it merits ; the evidence for accuracy is exceptionally strong ; five percipients in absolute agreement as to what they heard, and the time they heard it ; and the 'ghost' herself able to give her side of the experience, which exactly corroborated that of the five percipients. It is a particularly difficult incident to explain away ; but if at the time Mrs. Snow dreamed or imagined herself walking about her house, five persons actually heard her footsteps in exactly the part of the house she supposed herself to be in, then the whole case against the possibility of supernormal sounds would seem to collapse. As Professor William James said, the existence of one white crow proves that all crows are not black.

But under what head this case should be classified is certainly debatable. Was it caused by telepathy ?—Mrs. Snow in her extremity of pain being a strong enough agent to affect her two daughters and three servants with the same hallucination. It may be noted that all five were probably beginning to feel sleepy, (it being 11 p.m.), and it is in this stage between sleeping and waking that people are most open to receive telepathic impressions.

Those who believe in the existence of what is

generally termed an 'astral body' would say that during a few moments of unconsciousness, Mrs. Snow's astral body went home, and walked along the lobby from the front door. The cause of the occurrence is in our present state of knowledge a matter of doubt. But the fact seems proved by the evidence that when Mrs. Snow, presumably in her nightgown, was in bed in Edinburgh, she was heard to walk about in her own house, attired in a rustling silk dress.

The following case of the appearance of a dying man to his little daughter, is also taken from the *S.P.R. Journal*. I have slightly abridged it. Mrs. B. wrote:—"I must mention that my husband was taken seriously, and as it proved hopelessly ill, when our little daughter, to whom he was passionately attached, was two and a half years of age; and he was ordered by his doctors to travel. It is necessary here to mention—for on this hangs the strangest part of my tale—that up to this time my husband had only a moustache, which was exceedingly fair, but on leaving home he allowed his whiskers and his beard to grow, and they came on very dark.

When he had been away from home six months—during which time he never saw either of his children—he had a stroke of paralysis. I was with him in Surrey, whilst my little girl and my boy were in Kent." (The children were under the care of an aunt of Mrs. B.'s, and her sister-in-law, Miss B.) The afternoon that Mr. B. lay dying "the two children were playing in the nursery, when, unobserved, the little girl ran out of the room, and all in the house were presently startled by her calling from the hall to her brother, in most delighted and excited tones, to come into the dining-room, for 'poor papa' had come home. My aunt, the servants,



and my little son all ran to her, when she seized the boy by the hand and eagerly drew him into the room. Her surprise and disappointment to find it empty were great. She then told how she had drawn a chair to the sideboard (and there it was), that she might get to the biscuit-box ; when turning to mount it, she saw ' poor papa ' sitting in his arm chair ; that he put out his arms for ' baby ' to kiss him, but baby wouldn't 'cause he looked so funny, he had black whiskers all round here,' and the child pointed to her cheeks and chin. She had not seen her father for six months ; she had naturally never been told that he was growing a beard. She was questioned, and cross-questioned, but never varied her tale in one particular."

Miss B. who had been absent from Kent, attending her brother's deathbed in Surrey, wrote:—" On my returning home the night he died, the following strange incident was told me. My brother's little girl, nearly three, on the afternoon he was dying, thought she would go and get some biscuits, (a habit she had). In a few moments she called to her brother, ' Come into the dining-room, Boy, poor papa has come home, and he held out his arms for baby to go to him, but baby wouldn't because he had black whiskers all round here.' This alarmed the aunt and the maid, who knew there was no one in the house, and who searched high and low, and found no one. It is my firm belief that my brother's spirit was constantly with his child, for she frequently complained that someone was ' blowing on her,' which ceased the day and moment he was buried."

Persons who see, or think they see, phantasms, frequently state that a sensation of chill, or a cold wind, precedes or accompanies the apparition. It is noteworthy that this tiny child should have had this

experience, as her tender years precluded all possibility of her knowing or understanding the experiences of others.

A case of a hallucination, apparently caused by a dying person, is the following :—

From Prince Victor Duleep Singh.

“Highclere Castle, Newbury, November 8, 1894 :—

“On a Saturday in October, 1893, I was in Berlin with Lord Carnarvon. We went to a theatre together and returned before midnight. I went to bed, leaving as I always do, a bright light in the room (electric light.) As I lay in bed I found myself looking at an oleograph which hung on the wall opposite my bed. I saw distinctly the face of my father, the Maharajah Duleep Singh, looking at me, as it were out of this picture; not like a portrait of him, but his real head. The head about filled the picture frame. I continued looking, and still saw my father looking at me with an intent expression. Though not in the least alarmed, I was so puzzled that I got out of bed, to see what the picture really was. It was an oleograph commonplace picture of a girl holding a rose and leaning out of a balcony, an arch forming a background. The girl's face was quite small, whereas my father's head was the size of life and filled the frame.

“I was in no special anxiety about my father at the time, and had for some years known him to be seriously out of health; but there had been no news to alarm me about him. Next morning, Sunday, I told the incident to Lord Carnarvon. That evening, (Sunday) late on returning home, Lord Carnarvon brought two telegrams to my room and handed them to me. I said at once, ‘My father is dead.’ That was the fact. He had had an apoplectic seizure on the Saturday evening about nine o'clock,

from which he never recovered, but continued unconscious and died on the Sunday, early in the afternoon. My father had often said to me that if I was not with him when he died he would try and come to me.

“I am not subject to hallucinations, and have only once had any similar experience, when, as a school-boy, I fancied I saw the figure of a dead schoolboy who had died in the room which I slept in with my brother ; but I attach no importance to this.

Victor Duleep Singh.”

Lord Carnarvon wrote, ‘I can confirm Prince Victor Duleep Singh’s account. I heard the incident from him on Sunday morning. The same evening, at about 12 p.m., he received a telegram notifying him of his father’s sudden illness and death. We had no previous notice of his father’s illness. He has never told me of any similar previous occurrence. Carnarvon.’

Maharajah Duleep Singh died on Sunday, October 22, 1893.

In S.P.R. *Proceedings*, Vol. V, a case is recorded of a somewhat rare nature, inasmuch as the phantasm speaks, giving information subsequently proved to be correct. Col. H., known to Mr E. Gurney, wrote that at the commencement of the Transvaal War his friend J. P. being ordered to the front, they had breakfast together at the club, and parted at the club door. “‘Good-bye, old fellow,’ I said, ‘we shall meet again I hope.’ ‘Yes,’ he said, ‘we shall meet again.’ I can see him now, as he stood, smart and erect, with his bright black eyes looking intently into mine. A wave of the hand, as the hansom whirled him off, and he was gone.

“The Transvaal war was at its height. One night,

after reading for some time in the library of the club, I had gone to my rooms late. It must have been nearly one o'clock when I turned into bed. I had slept perhaps some three hours or so, when I woke with a start. The grey dawn was stealing in through the windows, and the light fell sharply and distinctly on the military chest of drawers which stood at the further end of the room, and which I had carried about with me everywhere during my service. Standing by my bed, between me and the chest of drawers, I saw a figure, which in spite of the unwonted dress—unwonted at least to me—and of a full black beard, I at once recognised as that of my old brother-officer. (The apparition wore khaki, and a pith helmet.) I noted all these particulars in the moment I started from sleep, and sat up in bed looking at him. His face was pale, but his bright black eyes shone as keenly as when a year and a half before, they had looked at me as he stood with one foot on the hansom, bidding me adieu.

“Fully impressed for the brief moment that we were stationed together at C. in Ireland, or somewhere, and thinking that I was in my barrack-room, I said, ‘Hallo, P. am I late for parade?’ P. looked at me steadily, and replied, ‘I’m shot.’ ‘Shot!’ I exclaimed, ‘Good God, how and where?’ ‘Through the lungs,’ replied P., and as he spoke his right hand moved slowly up the breast, until the fingers rested over the right lung. ‘What were you doing?’ I asked. ‘The General sent me forward,’ he answered, and the right hand left the breast to move slowly to the front, pointing over my head to the window, and at the same moment the figure melted away.

“I rubbed my eyes to make sure I was not dreaming, and sprang out of bed. I felt sure my old friend was no more, and what I had seen was only

an apparition. But yet how account for the voice?—the ready and distinct answers? That I had seen a spirit, certainly something that was not flesh and blood, and that I had conversed with it, were alike indisputable facts. But how to reconcile these apparent impossibilities? The thought disquieted me, and I longed for the hour when the club would open, and I could get a chance of learning from the papers any news from the seat of war in the Transvaal. The hours passed feverishly. I was first at the club that morning, and snatched greedily at the first paper. No news of the war whatever. I passed the day in a more or less unquiet mood, and talked over the whole circumstance with an old brother officer, Colonel W. He was as fully impressed as I was with the story of the appearance. The following morning I was again a solitary member of the club, and seized with avidity the first paper that came to hand. This time my anxiety was painfully set at rest, for my eye fell at once on the brief lines that told of the battle of Lang's Neck, and on the list of killed, foremost among them all being poor J. P. I noted the time the battle had been fought, calculated it with the hour I saw the figure, and found that it almost coincided. From this simple fact I could only surmise that the figure had appeared to me in London almost at the very moment that the fatal bullet had done its work at the Transvaal.

“Two questions now arose in my mind. First, as to proof that poor P. happened to wear that particular uniform at the time of his death, and whether he carried a beard—which I myself had never seen him wear. Second, whether he met his death in the manner indicated, viz., by a bullet through the right lung. The first facts I established

beyond dispute about six months afterwards, through an officer who was at the battle of Lang's Neck and who had been invalided home. He confirmed every detail. The second fact was confirmed more than a year later, by a mutual friend, J. S., the war being over. On my asking J. S. if he had heard how poor P. was shot, he replied, 'Just here,' and his fingers travelled up his breast, exactly as the fingers of the figure had done, until they rested on the very spot over the right lung."

The next case is of a different type:—

From Madame de Gilibert, *The Paddocks, Haywards Heath*. June 1883. "In my early days I lived in a large house, belonging to my grandfather, (the Earl of Egremont), at Petworth, from which we removed at his death, (1837); from this date I conclude that I could not have been younger than 11 or older than 12 when the following occurrence took place, between the beginning of the year 1836 and the winter of 1837.

"I must describe that part of the house which we, the family, occupied on the ground floor. My grandfather's room was on the south side of a long passage, which communicated with the more public parts of the house. Opposite his door, on the north side of the passage, was a swinging red baize door, which led to a narrow corridor, having on one side two doors, one my mother's bedroom, and the other the door of my father's dressing-room; on the other side was a small staircase, leading to two rooms occupied by Garland, a superior servant, who took care of my grandfather, who was very old. All the grandchildren were very fond of Garland, who spoilt us all. One afternoon I had gone up to her rooms, and not finding her, as she had not returned from the steward's room from dinner, I turned to go down stairs. I generally

'slid' down those stairs in a way peculiar to myself. Balancing myself upon my chest, and straightening myself into a nearly horizontal position, I used to let myself go down the incline with an impetus. I was in this position just about to launch myself, when I was aware of a figure, which came from the baize door: and which astonished me, and made me pause. It was a female figure, in soft clinging drapery, greyish whitish; some sort of shawl or kerchief crossed over the bosom; the features well cut, delicate, and of an aquiline type; but what struck me the most was the head-dress or coif, which had lace lappets or strings which, passing under the chin, were tied in a bow on the top of the head. I was, as I said, astonished, but not frightened. So many people did go about the house that it never occurred to me to be anything supernatural. But when the figure glided past the two doors I have mentioned, a sort of revulsion took place in me. I let myself slide down the balustrade and rushed to stop her, and tell her that there was no way out. (There was a disused door, but it had been long blocked up). I could not have been five seconds behind the figure, but when I reached the blocked door, there was nothing.

"I knew no one could pass, but I ran round to the children's nurseries, with which that door had communicated, and began asking the nurses whether they had seen 'an old woman in a white dressing-gown and grey shawl and lace ribbons under her chin and tied on the top of her head,' adding 'and she had a nose like Mrs. Pullen,' (the head laundress, who was a sort of female Duke of Wellington). I only got laughed at and snubbed by the nurses, but when Garland came in, and I told her, she seemed vexed at first, and ended by scolding me, so I was 'shut up.' But nevertheless I knew that I could not account for

it, and every detail of dress, feature, and gait is as vivid now as it was at the time.

“Many years afterwards I was in Paris after my marriage, and I used to see a cousin of my mother’s, who had married abroad, and I told her once what I have above narrated. Madame de Valmar at once said to me, ‘My dear, you have described your great aunt,’ (Lady Carnarvon, who died February 10, 1826) ‘to the minutest item of her dress and appearance.’ ‘And,’ continued Madame de Valmar, ‘she came you say from the swing door which led to your grandfather’s room. She came to fetch her brother. He died very soon after.’ Of course I do not believe this explanation of the mysterious figure; still the nurseries with which the disused door communicated had been Lady Carnarvon’s apartments, and she had died there.

C. de Gilibert.”

In answer to inquiries, Madame de Gilibert wrote:—  
“The only two portraits of Lady Carnarvon at Petworth represent her very young.”

Though, taken at their face value, the phantasms in the cases given above appear to have some kind of objective reality, yet it must be borne in mind that phantasms purely subjective are not uncommonly supposed when seen to be objective. The following hallucination appears to have been telepathic.

The percipient, Mr. S wrote to Dr. Bramwell:—  
‘Dear Dr. Bramwell, As promised I now send you an account of my little thought transference experience. ‘Twas thus. I sat opposite my eldest daughter, who was reading a book by the fireside. Presently I exclaimed, “Good gracious!” My daughter saying, “What is it?” I replied, “I could have sworn I saw a dog enter the room.” I described the dog minutely.



My daughter in great surprise told me that she had that moment read a description of just such a dog. I do not even now know the title of the book. We kept no dog at that time, nor had we conversed about one.'

In reply to inquiries Mr. S. wrote:—' Dear Sir, In reply to yours of 14th Inst., the incident *re* thought-transference 'twixt my daughter and myself took place on a Sunday about a year ago. My daughter would be willing to give an account of the matter. She does not remember my giving a detailed description of the dog, but simply that I exclaimed, "I just saw such a big dog rush into the room." My daughter tells me that immediately before my exclamation she had read the following words from a book, ("Lewis Arundel") "As he spoke, he uttered a low peculiar whistle; in obedience to his signal a magnificent Livonian wolf-hound, etc, etc, sprang into the room." It is not a common experience of mine to imagine I see anything which is not tangibly present, and I am very sceptical about other folks' report *re* such things.'

Miss Goodrich Freer records a visual hallucination of an unusual character. "I was visiting for the first time at the house of a friend who had recently married. Her husband I had never met, but all that I had ever heard had led me to expect to find him an agreeable gentleman of good birth, fortune, and position. We were introduced, and I soon perceived that he had at least the wish to please, and to show hospitality to all the guests assembled. However, from the first moment that I had opportunity to observe him at all carefully, I was troubled by a curious and perplexing hallucination. No matter where he happened to be—the dinner table, in the conservatory, at the piano—for me the real back-

ground disappeared and a visionary scene succeeded. I saw the same man in his boyhood—he was in reality very youthful in appearance—gazing towards me with an expression of abject terror, his head bowed, his shoulders raised as if to defend himself from actual blows. I discovered afterwards that this scene was one which had actually taken place at a famous public school, when, in consequence of a disgraceful act of fraud, he was ignominiously expelled, and had to ‘run the gauntlet’ of his school-fellows.”

The following—abridged—account of a hallucination, (reported in full in *S. P. R. Journal*), is of some interest. I have substituted pseudonyms for the real names of the persons concerned.

“On August 4th, 1913, I had been invited by a friend, Miss B., living in the neighbouring town, some three miles off, to meet Mr. T. V. Key. On the afternoon of that day, therefore, I rode over to her house, leaving my wife, who was not well enough to accompany me, resting by herself.

At tea-time we talked, I think, entirely upon psychical matters, and I remember asking Mr. Key if he saw ‘auras’ round people, and, if so, what he saw round me. At first he saw nothing, but later he said: ‘You asked me to tell you, I do now see something.’ He saw two things behind me, (I now refer to my notes made the same evening on my return). ‘One a dark—half-human creature, with knotted hands placed upon my shoulders.’ This he said was symbolical of illness near at hand—a warning.’

Then appeared the faint slight figure of a young woman with oval face, etc,’ (here follow some details which very well apply to my wife’s appearance). She ‘tried to avert the illness.’

When I came home towards six o’clock my wife told me she had been very anxious about my being

out in the cold wind ; also—and this is the important part of the case—she had been quite obsessed by a somewhat grotesque story of a man dressed up as a gorilla who comes up behind the master of the house and strangles him with his hands.

P.C. Laurence.”

Mrs. Laurence and Miss B. write, confirming Mr. Laurence's statement. No illness followed, and the hallucination counts as evidence for telepathy, and not for mystical or symbolic premonition.

In considering the phenomena of visual hallucinations it must always be borne in mind that when we speak of the sense of sight, we mean that a certain number of things external to us are reflected in the retina of the eye, which in some way is in communication with the brain, and through that with the mind. We do not know how many things we may be surrounded by, which the eye is incapable of reflecting ; but we know we cannot see the ether, and that certain colours exist which cannot be seen by human beings, though insects appear to be conscious of them.

Similarly, the human ear is capable of receiving and conveying to the brain and mind only certain sounds in certain keys: some ears are incapable of hearing the high-pitched squeak of the bat. It is possible, and even probable that we are in the midst of waves of sound, ethereal or otherwise, which our ears cannot catch. It is not unusual for an invalid to suffer from abnormal powers of audition. For some months, when dangerously ill, I myself could hear, as loud noises which seemed to hit my ears, sounds made several storeys below where I lay, which ordinarily I could not hear at all. This abnormal hearing is not caused by any alteration in the mech-

anism of the ear itself, but apparently by some morbid state of the nerves, produced by weakness, the nerves acting on the brain and through the brain on the ear.

Though these physiological facts do not throw much light on the phenomena of oral or visual hallucinations, they cause one to ponder vaguely whether these can be caused by an abnormal extension of the senses of sight and hearing, which enables ethereal bodies or sounds to become apparent for a brief space. Or whether, on the other hand, hallucinations are caused by impressions received immediately by the mind, and then through the brain conveyed to the ear or eye; thus exactly reversing the normal process.

The following instance of an oral hallucination is taken from the S.P.R. Journal, but it is also to be found in *Human Personality*: it was sent by the Right Hon. Sir John Drummond Hay K.C.B., G.M. C.G., who was for many years H.M.'s Minister in Morocco, and resided at Tangier.

'September 16th, 1889. In the year 1879 my son Robert Drummond Hay resided at Mogador with his family, where he was at that time Consul. It was in the month of February. I had lately received good accounts of my son and his family. I was also in perfect health. About 1 a.m. (I forget the exact day in February), whilst sleeping soundly at Tangier, I was woke by hearing distinctly the voice of my daughter-in-law, who was with her husband at Mogodor, saying in a clear but distressed tone of voice, "Oh, I wish papa only knew that Robert is ill." There was a night lamp in the room. I sat up and listened, looking round the room; but there was no one except my wife, sleeping quietly in bed. I listened for some seconds, expecting to hear footsteps

outside, but complete silence prevailed, so I lay down again, thanking God that the voice which woke me was an hallucination. I had hardly closed my eyes when I heard the same voice and words, upon which I woke Lady Drummond Hay and told her what had occurred, and I got up and went into my study adjoining the bedroom, and noted it in my diary. Next morning I related what had happened to my daughter, saying that though I did not believe in dreams, I felt anxious for tidings from Mogador. That port, as you will see in the map, is about 300 miles south of Tangier. A few days after this incident, a letter arrived from my daughter-in-law, Mrs. R. Drummond Hay, telling us that my son was seriously ill with typhoid fever and mentioning the night during which he had been delirious. Much struck by the coincidence that it was the same night I had heard her voice, I wrote to tell her what had happened. She replied the following post, that in her distress at seeing her husband so dangerously ill, and from being alone in a distant land, she had made use of the precise words which had startled me from sleep, and had repeated them. As it may be of interest to you to receive a corroboration of what I have related, from the persons I have mentioned who happen to be with me at this date, they also sign, to affirm the accuracy of what I have related.

'When I resigned in 1886, I destroyed, unfortunately, a number of my diaries, and amongst them that of 1879, or I should have been able to state the day, and might have sent you the leaf, on which I noted the incident.

'At my request my daughter-in-law has written an account of what she saw when living at Tangier in 1870. I remember well her telling me that she had seen the Moorish hunter who had been accidentally

shot, and of our hearing the following day that it was at the same hour she had seen him when he was actually killed out hunting in a wood many miles distant from my summer residence where she was living.

J. H. Drummond Hay.  
Annette Drummond Hay.  
Euphemia Drummond Hay.  
Alice Drummond Hay."

This is a well attested instance of a type of case by no means uncommon; I give next an oral hallucination of a rarer type, reported in *S.P.R. Proceedings*, Vol. VI.

The Rev. J.L.B., Minister of S., a small hamlet in the south of Scotland, wrote:—" July 23, 1889. It affords me much pleasure in answer to your letter of the 20th, which I only received to-day, to give you an account of my experience in connection with the music in D. woods, which 'does not seem due to any ordinary source.' I have heard it I think, four times, and always at the same place, viz., on the public road, which runs along the south bank of the Tweed, and which passes, at the distance of three-quarters of a mile, the old churchyard of D. The churchyard, from which the music always seems to come, is south of the road, and at a much higher elevation, and the intervening ground is densely covered with wood. The first two or three times I heard the sound, it was very faint, but sufficiently distinct to enable me to follow the swellings and cadences. I do not know why, but on these occasions I never for a moment thought it was real music. Neither did I think it anything very unusual, though the tones seemed more ethereal than any I had ever heard before. I am exceedingly fond of music, and, in my walks,

frequently sing without sound (if I may use such an expression) tunes, pieces, and 'songs without words.' As there was on every occasion a breeze swaying the branches, I thought that, in my imagination, produced the result, though it did seem strange I never heard anything similar in other woods.

"Years passed, and I had forgotten all about the matter, when I heard it again, and I will not soon forget the last performance. Last year I was walking up to X., to drive with Mr. and Mrs. M. to a tennis match. When I reached the usual spot, there burst upon my ear, from the direction of the churchyard, what seemed to be the splendid roll of a full brass and reed band. It did not recall the former occasions, and I never for a moment doubted its reality. My first thought was that Sir Y.Z. had lent his park for a Sunday School treat; and my second was that the band was far too good, and the music of far too high a class for such a purpose. I walked on, enjoying it thoroughly, never dreaming that I was not listening to good ordinary music, till it suddenly struck me that the sound, though now faint, ought to have been inaudible, as there was now between me and the churchyard the big broad shoulder of S. (a hill). I began to remember the other—ininitely less distinct—performances I had heard, and though not superstitious enough to believe that there was anything which could not be explained on natural grounds, I felt that the explanation was beyond my power of discovery or conjecture. Of course I intended immediately telling my friends at X., but my attention must have been called to something else, as I did not do so. We drove away, and after some time we all, except Mrs. M., got out to walk up a steep hill. Walking at the side of the carriage I told the most minute circumstances of my strange experience.

Mrs. M. seemed to take it very seriously, but Mr. E. ridiculed the whole affair as a freak of the imagination.

“I tell you these little incidental circumstances to show you how indelibly the events of the day are graven upon my memory. I had not at that time heard that the sounds had been listened to by any other person, but it is now well known that they have often been heard by Sir Y. Z., and once by Lady Z. In the last case the music resembled that of a choir, unaccompanied by instruments. In my case there was nothing resembling vocal music.”

(Signed in full) J. L. B.

In answer to questions Mr. B. wrote on July 30, 1889. “I have never had any other hallucinations, so far as I know. I consider it absolutely impossible that there could have been a real band at the place. It could not have been there without the permission of Sir Y. Z. or of his manager. They were both at home at the time. The ‘cemetery’ is the churchyard of the suppressed parish of D. which was divided equally between S. and X. The church became ruinous, and was converted into a burial vault for the Z. family.”

Lady Z. wrote:—“On the hot, still afternoon of July 12th, 1888, I was sitting resting with some old ladies at our pretty little cemetery chapel, within the grounds of our house in Scotland, far away from all thoroughfare or roads. Whilst I was talking I stopped suddenly, exclaiming, ‘Listen! what is that singing?’ It was the most beautiful singing I had ever heard, just a wave of cathedral chanting, a great many voices, which only lasted a few seconds. The lady said she heard nothing, and thinking she might be deaf I said nothing. I quite thought it *might* be



haymakers at work, and yet I turned my head round, for the singing was so close by. It dawned on me, 'the Scotch need not say they cannot sing.' There were several others sitting with us, but they heard nothing, (which astonished me). I said nothing more till the evening, when I casually said to my husband, 'What was that *singing* where we were sitting this afternoon?' thinking he would reply, 'Oh, it was the men at work,' but, to my astonishment, he replied, 'I have often heard that before, and it is *chanting* I hear.' (Mark I had not said I had heard several voices, only singing, which was very remarkable). And then, and not till then, I saw that the voices could not have been human, and certainly I had not imagined it. I had never heard such heavenly (that is the only adjective I can use) music before, and would not have missed it for anything. I was in no wise in a sentimental or fanciful state of mind when I heard the music, but only talking of the common subjects of the day. This is my written statement, and absolutely true.

Signed by me (in full) A. Z."

From Sir Y. Z. 'When alone at the cemetery I have occasionally heard, from within the chapel, sounds as of chanting.

(Signed) Y. Z.'

A somewhat similar experience is recorded in a recent issue of the *S.P.R. Journal*, where the names are given in full.

"I visited the ruined Abbey of Jumièges on the first Sunday of July, 1913, (July 6). I was accompanied by my father, mother, and youngest brother. We arrived at the ruin about 3 p.m. and we proceeded at once to inspect the imposing-looking

ruin of the monastic church, called 'l'Eglise Notre Dame.' It is the largest and most impressive example of Norman ecclesiastical architecture I have ever seen. It was built cruciform, and the 'right-hand' arm of the cross joined on to another much smaller church, which was used as the parish church and goes by the name of 'l'Eglise St. Pierre.' The walls of this latter church stand more or less intact, but only the nave of the monastic church remains, and a small number of scattered stones mark the place where the choir was once. Trees and shrubs cover the spot where the presbytery once stood.

"After we had spent some time in the Notre Dame ruin, we walked on into the Church of 'St. Pierre.'

"We had been there about ten minutes admiring this exquisite fourteenth century Gothic ruin, and I then wandered away a short distance from my companions; I suddenly became aware of the sound of a large number of men's voices which seemed to come from the open space on our left where the few scattered stones marked the site of where the monastic choir had been. The singing was very soft; the air was quite familiar; I remember saying to myself twice: 'I am imagining this! I am imagining this!' and then the music 'left' my attention as I heard my father exclaim: 'Why, there are the monks singing!' I heard no more singing after that, so I really only heard it for a few seconds. I was so struck with the strangeness of the thing that I determined to pretend I had heard nothing, until I learnt from my companions if their experience had been the same as my own. I found this was the case, and we agreed that the voices were chanting 'Vespers'—that is to say, they were chanting a psalm in Latin. We tried to think of possible 'natural' explanations, but the present parish church

was a kilometre and a half from there—so the caretaker told us—besides which, if the sound had come from there, we should have heard it longer than a few seconds. It was a very fine day, and I do not remember that there was any wind. We spent about half an hour longer near the ruins without hearing anything else in such an extraordinary way.”

The father, mother, and brother, also wrote statements, fully corroborating the above account. One of them said, ‘The sounds were just those of a choir singing under a vast vaulted roof.’”

## CHAPTER IX

### HAUNTED LOCALITIES

IN a paper on Phantasms of the Dead (*Proceedings* VI), Mr. Myers wrote :—" Meteorites—those other invaders from the unseen—were until lately quite as scornfully rejected, and naturally rejected, so long as the evidence for phenomena so marvellous rested on antique tradition, and peasants' tales. Then came a moment—like the moment which our inquiry is traversing now—at which inquiring men who had actually spoken with the peasants, and seen the fragments, believed that stones had fallen. And then suddenly the fall of meteorites was accepted as a natural phenomenon, an almost inexplicable, but a quite undeniable fact. In recent papers I have endeavoured to exhibit—so to say—some specimens of meteoric dust. In the present paper I must try to show the hollowness of the negative assumption, which for this inquiry corresponds to Lavoisier's famous dictum, 'There are no stones in the air, therefore none can fall upon the earth.'"

Mr. Myers wrote the above in 1889, since that date many cases of haunted houses and haunted localities have been collected by S.P.R. and may be found in the *Proceedings*; of these I have selected three which for various reasons appear to me most suitable for

insertion in this chapter. The first relates to a haunted road ; the second to a haunted house ; these two are both of what I may term the ordinary type. The third is of a quite extraordinary type, no other case of all those recorded by S.P.R. being at all similar.

In May, 1892, Miss M. W. Scott, of Lessudden House, St. Boswell's, Roxburghshire, when walking down a short incline on her way home, saw a tall man dressed in black a few yards in front of her. He turned a corner of the road, being still in view of her and there suddenly disappeared. On following him round the corner, Miss Scott found a sister of hers, also on her way home, who had just seen a tall man dressed in black, whom she took for a clergyman, coming to meet her on the road. She looked away for a moment, and on looking towards him again, could see no one anywhere near. Miss Scott on overtaking her, found her looking up and down the road, and into the fields, in much bewilderment. It appeared that they had not seen the man at exactly the same moment, nor in exactly the same place, but from their description of the surroundings it seems impossible that it could have been a real person, who had contrived to get away unnoticed.

In July of the same year, at about the same place, Miss Scott walking with another of her sisters saw approaching them a tall figure dressed in black, with a long coat, gaiters and knee-breeches, a wide white cravat and low-crowned hat ; the sister also saw the upper part of the figure, which seemed to fade away into the bank by the side of the road as they looked at it. Again in June, 1893, walking alone on the road in the morning, Miss Scott saw a dark figure some way in front, which she recognised as the apparition when she got nearer to it. She made a

determined effort to overtake it, but could not get nearer than a few yards, as it then seemed to float or skim away. At length, however, it stopped, turned round and faced her; then moved on a few steps, and turned and looked back again, finally fading from her view by a hedge. She was able to notice fully the details of the dress—knee-breeches, black silk stockings, and shoe buckles—like the dress of Scottish clergymen about a century ago. The apparition was also said to have been seen at different times, by some children, and other persons, in the neighbourhood; but of this no first-hand accounts were forthcoming. There was also a legend that a child had been murdered close by.

The next occurrence is described in the following letter, written by Miss Louisa Scott, the sister who shared Miss M. W. Scott's first experience:—  
“August 14, 1894. Dear Miss Guthrie, as I know you are interested in the movements of our ghost, I am writing to tell you another little anecdote about him. A young lady, who is governess in this neighbourhood, told me this afternoon of a meeting she had had with him this spring. She was returning home along the haunted road at about a quarter past four in the afternoon, when she was attracted by seeing in front of her a rather tall old man, dressed in a long black cloak, with one cape which came to a little below his shoulders; his hat, as on the occasions when my sisters and I saw him, was low-crowned, and the brim slouched over his eyes. My informant was much interested in this peculiar looking person, and did not take her eyes off him, whilst she watched him walk backward and forward between the turn of the road and a heap of stones about a hundred yards lower down; he repeated this six times, the last time stopping as if he were speaking to a man who

was cutting the hedge at the time. What struck Miss Irvine as peculiar was that the man who was hedge-cutting did not look round, and seemed quite unconscious of the other's presence. Miss Irvine walked on, and was going to pass the old man, when, to her astonishment, he vanished when she was only about three yards from him.

"I know that you will think it foolish of Miss Irvine not questioning the hedger, to whom the apparition looked as if he were speaking. I asked her why she had not, and she answered that she had not liked doing so, as the labourer would undoubtedly have thought her mad, as he clearly did not see anyone. I am sure you will think this story most interesting, knowing all our experiences in days gone by. The extraordinary part of this man is that he always frequents the same part of the road, and yet does not vanish twice on the same spot; when my sister and I saw him, he became invisible on the left side of the road; and when Miss Irvine saw him he vanished on the right.

"I do wish we could see 'our man' again. I have passed along that road hundreds of times since he was first seen, and at all hours of the day. I think he cannot have liked the way I stared at him the last time. Another thing we think funny is the variety of coats which he seems to possess, and all of an antique cut. He has the long black cloak with the cape in which Miss Irvine saw him; and the clerical looking cloak with the large deep pockets in which we met him; then on the other occasion when the village girls met him, he had round him the filmy looking sheet.

"My sister had written to Sir George Douglas to ask him if he can tell her the exact spot on this road where an old man was murdered by gypsies coming

from St. Boswell's fair many years ago. Sir George Douglas tells this story among a number of other old border tales, which no doubt you have read. I hope some day to be able to tell you more about the ghost. At present I am afraid he is underground. With kind regards, yours sincerely,

Louisa Scott."

Miss Irvine also wrote confirming the above account.

In August, 1898, Miss M. W. Scott wrote to Mr. Myers as follows :—"Our apparition is still seen. . . My latest experience was about a fortnight ago, when coming down the haunted road in the dusk I distinctly heard footsteps walking beside me, but could see nothing. . . Last autumn, and again in the dusk, I was walking down the little wood adjacent to the road with my sister. We were both talking upon indifferent subjects, and putting the ghost as far from our thoughts as possible, when suddenly I was carried spell-bound by distinctly seeing the apparition walking alongside of us on the other side of the hedge. My sister saw me gazing vacantly on space when I suddenly exclaimed 'The man!' When we came to the gate which divides the wood from the road, there was no one to be seen either way, though 'he' had walked within three feet of me the whole time ; he was invisible to my sister. It is a strange phenomenon altogether. He had the same countenance we have always seen, but I did not seem to have the power to look beyond his face. This ghost always appears when our thoughts are bound up in something else, but if the opposite, then we are sure not to see him, and many persons who have accompanied us up and down the road in hopes of seeing him, have, like ourselves, failed to do so."



On August 17, 1900, Miss Scott wrote to say that she had recently seen the apparition twice, the most recent occasion having been 'only last night.' On the first of these occasions, July 24, 1900, Miss Scott was talking to a friend "exactly upon the part known as the property of that 'mysterious he'; I had forgotten the very existence of our supernatural neighbour when I perceived the tall black figure walking on in advance with his back towards us, about twenty yards away."

On August 16, 1900, when he appeared, "there was a man with a pony and trap, cutting grass by the roadside within a few feet of where I saw the apparition appear—yet the most wonderful part of it all was that when I questioned the man, he declared he had seen no one. 'But,' I said, 'he was close beside you.' He still declared he saw no person there, so I let the matter end, though I expect that he, like the whole village, knows well the reputation of the road, for he looked slightly nervous, and remarked 'it was not a safe place to come down alone.'" Miss Scott on further inquiry stated that the pony "was really nearest the apparition, whose back was close to its head as he advanced. It may only have been a coincidence, but the pony gave itself a violent shake in its harness just at the time."

M. W. Scott.

The case of the haunted house, to be dealt with next, is fairly typical, but the evidence for supernatural occurrences is exceptionally strong.

The first account comes from Miss L. Morris, who wrote in June, 1888, describing her experiences during the time she inhabited the house, from October 1882 until December 1886. These experiences included heavy footsteps tramping round the

table in the drawing-room at which she was sitting. Footsteps heard elsewhere by a sister as well as herself collectively. Footsteps heard night after night until she became used to them. The door bell was constantly rung by invisible hands; and this happened even when it was open and under observation. Also knocks were heard at it when no one was outside. Doors in the house were opened, and left open;—a fact to be noted, as ghosts usually shut doors behind them. Twice Miss Morris saw a phantasm, 'a woman heavily robed in deepest black from her head to her feet; her face intensely sad, and deadly pale.'

Miss E. M. Morris confirmed her sister's account of the bell-ringing, and the opening of doors; and also stated that they had the boards taken up to trace the cause, if possible, of the bell-ringing, but could discover nothing.

"From December 1886 until November of the following year the house remained empty. It was then taken by Mrs. G., a widow lady with two children, girls of about nine and ten respectively, and one maid-servant. Mrs. G. had only come to X. about six months before taking the house, and was entirely ignorant that anything unusual had happened there. The account which follows, written at Mr. Gurney's request, in June, 1888, was compiled with the help of a diary, in which she had jotted down from day to day brief notices of any unusual occurrence." (This diary was inspected by Mr. Podmore.) "The names of the children in this account are fictitious."

Mrs. G. wrote:—"We had not been more than a fortnight in our new home (it was in December) when I was aroused by a deep sob and moan. 'Oh,' I thought, 'what has happened to the children?' I

rushed in, their room being at the back of mine ; found them sleeping soundly. So back to bed I went, when again another sob, and such a thump of somebody or something very heavy. 'What can be the matter?' I sat up in bed, looked all round the room, then to my horror a voice (and a very sweet one) said, 'Oh, do forgive me!' three times. I could stand it no more ; I always kept the gas burning, turned it up, and went to the maid's room. She was fast asleep, so I shook her well, and asked her to come into my room. Then in five minutes the sobs and moans recommenced, and the heavy tramping of feet, and such thumps, like heavy boxes of plate being thrown about. She suggested I should ring the big bell I always keep in my room, but I did not like to alarm the neighbourhood. 'Oh, do, ma'am, I am sure there are burglars next door, and they will come to us next.' Anything but pleasant, on a bitter cold night, standing bell in hand awaiting a burglar. Well, I told her to go to bed, and hearing nothing for half an hour, I got into mine, nearly frozen with cold and fright. But no sooner had I got warm than the sobs, moans, and noises commenced again. Three times I called Anne in, and then in the morning it all died away in a low moan.

"Of course nothing was said to the children, and I was hoping I should never experience such a thing again. I was in the drawing room deeply thinking about business matters, when I was startled by Edith giving such a scream. I ran to the door, and found her running up, followed by Florence and the servant. 'Oh. Birdie dear, I have seen such a dreadful white face peeping round the door! I only saw the head. I was playing with Floss (dog), and looking up, I saw this dreadful thing, Florence and Anne rushed in at once, but saw nothing.' I pacified

them by saying someone was playing a trick. But after that for months they would not go upstairs or down alone. It was very tiresome, and thinking seriously over the matter, I resolved to return my neighbour's call. I was ushered into the presence of two portly dames, and I should think they had arrived at that age not given to pranks. I looked at them, and mentally thought, 'That sweet voice does not belong to either of you.' They informed me they had lived in that house 18 years, so I thought I might venture to ask whether anything had ever taken place of a disagreeable nature in my house, as we were so constantly alarmed by heavy noises. I feared nothing and no one, but if my children were frightened I should leave, but I liked the house very much, and thought perhaps I might buy it. They said, 'Don't do that, but there is nothing to hurt you,' and I saw sundry nods and winks which meant more, so in desperation I said, 'Won't you tell me what has occurred?' 'Well, a few years ago, the bells began to ring, and there was quite a commotion, but then the former tenant, a Miss M., had a wicked servant.' The other dame replied, 'I may say, a very wicked servant.' Well, I could not get much more, but of course I imagined this very wicked servant had done something, and felt very uneasy.

"We had a dreadful night, December 29th, such heavy thumps outside the bedrooms; and I went to Mr. W., the agent, intending to tell him we must leave, or we should be bereft of our senses, but I was too late, the office was shut, so I went to friends and asked them to come and sleep, as I really was too unnerved to remain alone on New Year's Eve. They kindly came. Mrs. L. said she heard knocks. They returned home the next morning, having a young family to look after. I then wrote to a sister-in-law

I was fond of, and she came for a week, but everything was quiet. January 18th, I heard three loud knocks at my bedroom door. I was too terrified to speak for a minute, and then called out, 'Who's there? What do you want?' My terror was intense, for I thought, supposing it is a burglar. It was a great relief to hear the children call out: 'Birdie, who is knocking at your door?' 'I wish I could tell you.' A fortnight previously I asked a policeman on duty if he would see if anyone was in the empty house. He came to tell me it was securely fastened, and no one could get in. Then I suggested coiners under the houses, but he said they only go to old castles. 'Well then, what is it?' He said a sad occurrence had taken place some years ago. I said, 'Oh, dreadful!' but he was matter-of-fact was Policeman X., and replied, 'It is an every-day thing, and no doubt most of the houses people lived in, something has happened in.' 'But,' I said, 'this is such a very strange house, and we have no rest either by day or night, and why should this dreadful white face appear to my child?' Well, he didn't believe in ghosts. 'Very well,' I said, 'will you kindly catch whoever is frightening us, and let them be well punished?' 'But madam, I can't catch nothing!' 'Right, Policeman X., I knew that was impossible, but what am I to do?' So he suggested detectives, but that wouldn't do. I found that house very expensive, I had to keep the gas burning downstairs and up all night. I asked a young friend to stay, a clergyman's daughter. She laughed at such a thing as a ghost. We both went up the trap door and explored the space over the bedroom, and next to the roof; it was very dark, but I took a candle, and then discovered three holes as large as a plate between my house and the old ladies'. Next morning I walked

down to the landlord who owns both houses, and told him again what we were continually going through, and that I and my children were getting ill, and that it was quite impossible to live in the house. He came up the following day, and told me that a woman had hanged herself, he thought, in the room the children slept in. The holes were filled up, and I thought 'now nothing can come in to alarm us.'

"Florence was saying to her elder sister, 'You see it was your imagination, for I never see anything.' 'Wait till you do, you won't forget!' The next morning as Florence was passing the room on the stairs, she saw a man standing by the window, staring fixedly; blue eyes, dark brown hair, and freckles. She rushed up to me, looking very white and frightened; the house was searched at once, and nothing seen.

"I had forgotten to say that the night after the knocks came to my bedroom, I resolved that the dog, who is very sharp, should sleep outside, but oh, that was worse than all, for at a quarter past twelve I looked at my clock. He commenced to cry—it was not exactly howling—and tore at the carpet in a frantic manner. I threw the door wide open, and demanded what was the matter. The poor little animal was so delighted to see me. I saw he had biscuits and water, and the children were then awake, and asked me why Floss was making that noise. I went to bed, and in ten minutes he recommenced; I went out three times. Another night something seemed to walk to the children's door, and turn the handle, walk up to the washstand, shake the bed, and walk out. The children frequently saw lights in their bedroom, generally white, and Florence one night saw a white skirt hanging from the ceiling. She was

so frightened that she put her head under the clothes, and would not look again.

“Then my solicitor and his wife came down for a night. Mrs. C. could not go to sleep until four, as she heard such a heavy fall outside her bedroom door. One Sunday I was reading by the fire in the drawing-room, and thinking it was very cosy, when I heard a cry, and thinking it one of the children ill, was going upstairs. Edith called out, ‘Birdie, come quickly; something has opened and shut our door three times, and someone is crying.’ I went up, and we all heard someone sobbing, but where it came from we could not tell, but seemed near the wall.

“One day, when I was out, the children were playing with Anne in the room downstairs; they all distinctly heard a very heavy footfall walk across the drawing-room, play two notes on the piano, and walk out. I came in shortly after, astonished to see them, candle in hand, looking under the beds. I was writing in the drawing-room, when the front door bell rang violently. I asked who it was, ‘No one, ma’am.’ I thought I would stand by the window, and presently it rang again; down the servant came, no one there, and after the third time I told her not to go to the door unless she heard a knock as well. I knew no one had pulled the bell, because I was standing by the window. I then had an interview with Miss M.” (A summary of Miss Morris’s previous experiences has already been given).

Mrs. G. continues:—“Well, then friends suggested I should have the floors up, the chimneys taken out to see if there was any communication with the other house, and the door taken away and a new one put on. One friend offered to lend me a mastiff which flew at everything; another offered me his savage bull-dog, which was always chained up when I called

there ; and then last but not least, I was to have two detectives. 'Well,' I thought, 'it is time to move, in this bitter weather to have no floors, no grates, no door, a ferocious mastiff, and still worse a bull-dog and two detectives, a pretty state of affairs for anyone!' I asked my landlord to release me, but he would not unless I paid my rent up to Christmas."

Mrs. G. took her children away for a time to stay with friends in London, leaving her servant and the servant's father in charge of her house. After a few weeks absence she received a letter from her servant to say that they could not remain in the house any longer, in consequences of the disturbances therein. Mrs. G. then decided to leave it ; but returned there with a friend temporarily. The friend heard 'thumps and bumps, and a hissing sound round the top of the bed.'

Mr. Gurney wrote, "I had a long talk with Mrs. G. on June 13th, 1888. She went over the whole history of her, and her children's experiences in the house. She struck me as an excellent witness. I have never received an account in which the words and manner of telling were less suggestive of exaggeration or superstition. There is no doubt that she was simply turned out of a house which otherwise exactly suited her, at very serious expense and inconvenience."

Mr. Podmore interviewed Anne H., Mrs. G's servant, and wrote on July 9th, 1888:—"I talked to Anne H., a clever, intelligent girl, to-day. She gave me a graphic description of the shadow moving across the window and wall of her bedroom." The above refers to an item in a lengthy written testimony of Anne H.

A newspaper of April 5th, 1879 contains the following account of a suicide which took place in



the house :—"SINGULAR CASE OF SUICIDE  
The Coroner held an inquest on Saturday at the — Inn, on the body of Mrs. M. F., aged 42 years, who committed suicide by hanging herself on the previous day. Deceased, a lodging housekeeper in — road, had more than once threatened to destroy herself, but no importance was attached to what she said. On Friday, however, she sent a letter to a friend saying that she would never be seen alive again in this world; but this, like her previous assertions, was regarded as an empty threat, and it was not until Mr. B — lodging at her house missed her, and mentioned the fact to a relative, that any notice was taken of the letter. The house was then searched, and deceased was discovered hanging by a skipping-rope to a peg behind the door of the top back bedroom, quite dead. The jury returned a verdict, 'Suicide whilst in a state of unsound mind.' (Date of suicide, March 28th, 1879).

The house was subsequently occupied by an Associate of the Society for Psychical Research, and his wife, for a period of nearly thirteen and a half months; they went to it on August 17, 1888; about two months after Mrs. G. had left it. This gentleman states :—"Although my wife and I had no visual experiences in the house, we were certainly confronted with a few odd noises—of a sort which would undoubtedly have arrested attention in any house, no matter whether it had a ghostly reputation or not. I carefully made a note of every unusual event immediately after its recurrence; and as the number of them is not great, I give the complete list, taken from my diary."

Various sounds such as might be made by throwing things about, knocks, and such like were heard. Also the front door bell rang unaccountably. The

new servant mentioned 'that she thought queer noises occurred in the house. Said, often when in bed she heard footsteps coming up and down stairs by her door.' On October 16th, "a visitor slept in front bedroom. He stated next morning that about 1.30 he had heard a peculiar crisp noise in his room, something like a silk dress rustling." On December 9th, the tenant of the house, being alone, (it was Sunday evening), heard a noise of which he said, 'I can only compare the sound to that which would be made if half a brick were tied to a piece of string and jerked about over the linoleum.' This sound "seemed to commence close to the door of the room in which I was sitting; it appeared to proceed along the passage, to the top of the kitchen stairs—traversing a distance of some 15 feet in about half-a-dozen jumps—and then it seemed to turn the staircase corner, and to jump down three or four stairs one at a time. I went out, carrying my reading lamp with me, but nothing could I find, either in the passage or down the kitchen stairs. So, much puzzled, I returned and resumed my writing. In about five minutes the bumps began again, seeming to me to come from the part of the kitchen stairs where they had previously left off. This time I ran out too quickly to take the lamp with me. Just as I reached the head of the stairs the knocks stopped again. All was now dark, but fearing to lose time by returning for the lamp I went downstairs backwards, feeling along each stair with my hands as I proceeded. Reaching the bottom, I stepped into the kitchen and turned up the gas there, but nowhere was anything to be seen which could have caused the curious sounds. More perplexed still, I returned once more to my writing, but had scarcely shut the sitting-room

door and settled myself at the desk when three sharp thumps sounded on the floor just outside the door. I sprang across the room and threw the door open. Nothing was to be seen. Again I searched in all directions—without getting the slightest hint of an explanation. . . . The idea that the noises really occurred in the next (empty) house does not commend itself to me for the simple reason that they seemed to be so distinctly in the places referred to. I was the only person in the house. We had no cat at the time; and we never at any time found any indications of mice in the place.”

Dec. 15. “A most remarkable and inexplicable noise occurred at 11. 30 p.m. on this date. Our bedroom adjoined the sitting-room, and was separated from it by curtains. Across one corner of the sitting-room (one of the corners adjoining the bedroom) a piano was placed, and over this instrument, upon the wall, hung a guitar. The guitar, as most people are aware, has six strings—three silver and three gut. On this night I had retired before my wife, and had been in bed about five minutes; she remained in the sitting-room in order to say her prayers by the fire, as it was a very cold night. In the midst of the quietness which ensued I suddenly heard the guitar play—*pung, pang, ping—pung, pang, ping*—here my wife called out in a loud awe-struck whisper, ‘Did you hear that?’ whilst even as she spoke a third *pung, pang, ping*, sounded clearly through the rooms. I immediately sprang out of bed and rushed in to her, finding her kneeling upon the hearthrug by an arm-chair, staring with astonishment at the guitar upon the wall. No more sounds were heard, though we sat waiting by the fire for over half-an-hour. My wife told me that she had been distracted once or twice during her prayers

by a noise like someone sweeping their hand over the wall paper by the fireplace and in the recess across which the piano stood. . . She said that when the guitar sounded its chords (in arpeggio) for the third time, she was looking straight at the instrument, and such critical observation as she had at command under the surprise of the thing, satisfied her that there was nothing visible near it, and that it made no perceptible movement.

Well, that is all. The three gut strings of the guitar unmistakably sounded three times in succession, (making nine notes altogether), when no person was touching it, and nothing was touching it as far as we could discover. The first explanation which suggests itself is that the pegs slipped round slightly and so caused the strings to vibrate and emit sounds. . . But the answer to that suggestion is, 1st, the sounds were not of that sort—they were more clear and musical than the result of slipping pegs would be; 2nd, it is extremely improbable that three pegs would each slip just enough to produce the corresponding chord in a lower key: 3rd, if this improbable thing happened once, it could hardly happen three times in succession, and without the changes of pitch being noticed; 4th, *all six strings of the guitar were perfectly in tune next day*: so slipping down is out of the question. How to account for the fact I do not know. I can only record it as it occurred, and leave it to others to estimate the probability of such a feat being accomplished by mice, (in a house where mice were unknown), or by a moth (in December), or by something similar which escaped our observation.

January 13, 1889. When I came in, about 10.30, my wife informed me that when sitting alone during the evening she had heard the guitar make one note.

January 24. To-day our maid-servant (from whom we believed the history and reputation of the house had been carefully kept), complained that she had heard outside her bedroom door . . . a loud crash like a quantity of bottles being hurled upon the floor.

February 16. Lieut. Colonel S., Sir L. G., and Captain N. occupied the two bedrooms. In the morning the two former reported hearing simultaneously a noise, apparently on the linoleum between the open doors of the two rooms, like paper rustling or mortar falling. I believe they immediately rushed from their rooms and met on the landing.

March 15. My wife's sister slept in top ba k bedroom on this and five or six following nights. After the first night she reported hearing three loud raps on her room door, such as might be done with a walking-stick. She could not say quite what time. She did not hear anything on the following nights.

June 29. Mrs. V., a visitor, reported that when alone in the sitting-room, between seven and eight this evening, she heard a note from the guitar. Subsequently Mrs. V. stated that the note heard was somewhere about 'A above middle C.' If the note was as high as this, and came from the guitar, it must have been produced by one of the gut strings. Mrs. V. had no idea that the guitar had ever done this sort of thing."

A subsequent tenant, who took possession on September 28, 1889, wrote on March 13, 1890, 'I am sorry to say we are thoroughly disappointed in the ghost; we have neither heard nor seen anything which even a believer in ghosts could lay to their charge.'

Mr. Podmore suggested that it is possible "These

happenings may have been mere coincidence ; or the apparitions may have, in each case, been generated by the alarm caused by the occurrence of inexplicable noises, themselves possibly to be explained as hallucinatory superstructures built up round a nucleus of real sounds. Or, it is permissible to conjecture that the later experiences may have been started by thought-transference from Miss Morris, whose thoughts, no doubt occasionally, turned to the house in which she had suffered so much agitation and alarm."

Mr. Myers commented on the above as follows:—  
"Miss Morris, who had left the house for a full year when the new disturbances began, can hardly be imagined to have been still in a state of active panic. Still we may suppose, as Mr. Podmore says, that she at times thought over her past annoyances. The result of these fatal recollections should certainly teach us to control our thoughts as strictly as our actions. For the very first effect of Miss Morris's ponderings was "a deep sob and moan," followed by a thump, and a cry of, "Oh, do forgive me;" all disturbing poor Mrs. G. who had the ill luck to find herself in a bedroom about which Miss Morris was possibly thinking. Worse was to come, as the narrative shows ; and at last the unconscious Miss Morris drove Mrs. G. out of the house in despair. Surely on this view the peace of us all rests on a sadly uncertain tenure! Many things—experiences quite other than ghostly—have happened in many houses on which former occupants may look back with feelings of regret or horror. There might indeed be a complex group of phantasms waiting for each new comer if the accumulated reminiscences of all previous inmates took ghostly form before his eyes."

(*Proceedings* VI. p. 326,7).

It will be noted that the phantasms seen, and the sounds heard by the various occupants of the house varied very considerably. This is by no means an unusual feature in the case of a haunted house, and has sometimes been brought forward as an argument against the veridity of the haunting in question. But we know too little about the subject to be able to say whether any special detail of phenomena renders a case more or less probable; all we can reasonably attempt is to decide for or against the value and reliability of the evidence given by the various normal human beings who profess to have seen or heard abnormal things, on the same grounds on which evidence would be accepted or rejected by a jury.

Certain cases seem to suggest the possibility that, just as some men and women become mediums, so do some houses become mediumistic. Such a case is referred to by Miss Goodrich Freer, in her *Essays on Psychical Research*, where she writes:—"Another 'haunted house' with which I have been all my life familiar, is one as to which I, and many others, could tell countless stories. There is no association of the things seen and heard with any former occupants, though it may be instructive to note that the nearest house has an exceedingly definite and local 'ghost.' Here, however, there has been a great variety as to the ghosts seen and heard; so much so that it might be more correct to say that it is a house the occupants of which become haunted, rather than that it is a haunted house. Visitors see the doubles of distant friends; servants describe the persons of former visitors whom they have never seen. Even as a child of eight and upwards, I have frequently had in the 'haunted' room, visions which we should now classify as telepathic, intimations of the death of persons in whom at that age I felt no interest: vivid—I might almost

say *intense*, intuitions as to persons and events, otherwise beyond my power of criticism, and which I now know to have been justified. The house has repeatedly changed hands; my friends, like other previous and subsequent occupants, found it a very undesirable habitation, and were glad to get rid of it on almost any terms. No tenants could be induced to remain, and the property has finally been sacrificed at considerable pecuniary loss. Such a house might perhaps be described as a haunted atmosphere."

The following most remarkable 'ghost story,' was brought to the notice of the Society for Psychical Research, by Mr. Andrew Lang, who, on Oct. 17, 1893, wrote as follows:—"I send the following narrative, not for its value as evidence, but because it enables us to take a ghost half volley, as it were; the adventure being, to my knowledge, at this moment incomplete. The proceedings of the ghost, it will be remarked, are *vieux jeu*, and such as we seldom meet in modern science. The tale was told me orally, last night, Oct. 16, by a gentleman whom I shall call Dr. Ferrier; he is connected as trustee with the haunted house. To-day he brought me his narrative. Here begins his M.S. with all names altered. A. L." Mr. Lang gives his own account of this affair in his book, "Dreams and Ghosts," explaining that he was dining with Dr. Ferrier on Oct. 16, and the ghost story came up casually in the course of dinner. Had it not been for Mr. Lang's presence at that dinner, it is probable the story would never have been published.

Dr. Ferrier stated:—"Mrs. Elizabeth Blackburn died at 5 a.m. on December 22nd. 1878, in 6 Blake Street, into which she had moved only a few days previously. Her disease was chronic diarrhoea of long standing. Her children stayed on in the house till the eldest girl married Mr. Appleby in 1880. The



eldest son informed me that they frequently heard strange noises in the house during the night. The house was empty for a time; then tenanted for five years during which no noises were reported. The house again was empty until Lady-Day, 1888, when the present occupier, Mr. Buckley, entered. His mother and two sisters, on their entry, were much alarmed by sounds as of heavy steps on the staircase, which is of stone. This lasted for three years but was never heard by Mr. Buckley. A few months after the family entered, water burst out in the front area, from the breaking of a water main." (Mr. Lang notes, "Water is only carried up to the first floor. There is an unused system of hot air pipes. The sounds lasted after the main was mended.")

"About two years after the affair of the main, Miss Buckley was in the attic, kneeling by a trunk, when she felt some water 'switched' at her. She thought it was a practical joke of her brother's, but he was not in the room. A small pool of water was on the floor where she stood, and the wall beyond was sprinkled. Soon after, as Mr. Buckley went upstairs, in the dark, carrying an ink bottle and some pens, he found his hand was wet. He thought it must be ink, but on getting to the light found it was clean water; there was a little pool of water on the stair where this occurred, but no sign of damp on the ceiling above. For almost two years since this occurred, no noises have been heard."

The facts stated above were all known to Dr. Ferrier before.—"In October 1893, a Mrs. Claughton came to stay in the house. She had frequently been a visitor, and on one occasion, when nursing Mrs. Buckley (*mère*), had heard footsteps and the dragging of a heavy weight on the stairs about 1 a.m. On the night of October 8th and 9th, after hearing noises—

she opened her eyes, and saw leaning over her the figure of a woman, who was looking at her intently and very sadly. The woman said in a distinct voice, 'Follow me!' whereon Mrs. Claughton rose and followed her into the next room, the drawing-room. She took her bedroom candle which was flickering in the socket, and, in the drawing-room, paused to replace it by a pink candle from a table. She then saw that the figure had reached the further end of the drawing-room; the figure turned her head, said, in a distinct voice, 'to-morrow,' and vanished."

On the following morning Mrs. Claughton consulted Dr. Ferrier, who appears to have been an old friend. He advised her to change her room, which she disdained as cowardly. He suggested fixing up an electric alarm in her room, which was done. Next night the Buckleys were wakened by the alarm wildly pealed, and found Mrs. Claughton in a swoon on her bed, at 1.30 a.m.

Mrs. Claughton eventually explained that the ghost of Mrs. Blackburn had appeared again, with two others, and after making her take solemn oaths of secrecy, made her a certain communication, and asked her to do certain things. Mrs. Claughton was to go to a place she had never heard of, to a house and a man whom the phantom described. This man would help her in what she had to do, including a nocturnal visit to a church where she would receive some information. Mrs. Claughton wrote these directions in her diary. Mrs. Claughton did not directly name the place, but asked Mr. Buckley if he had ever heard of such a place as Meresby, (not the real name), which is an obscure village, within four to five hours of London.

Dr. Ferrier concluded his statement by saying "Mrs. Claughton left the town where these events

occurred on October 11th for London, meaning to visit Meresby as soon as possible. Here my information ceases." Mrs. Claughton had asked Dr. Ferrier for the date of Mrs. Blackburn's marriage. He sent her a note giving place and date. Mrs. Claughton *at once* showed Mr. Buckley and Dr. Ferrier that date noted in her diary.

Mrs. Claughton eventually gave a long account of her experiences to the (late) Marquis of Bute; in which she explains that the ghost who first appeared to her purported to be that of Mrs. Blackburn, who had died in the house; in order to prove this the apparition had given the date of her marriage, hence Mrs. Claughton's inquiries concerning it. On the second night the apparition of Mrs. Blackburn was accompanied by two others, men, one of whom stated himself to be George Howard, buried in Meresby Churchyard, and gave the dates of his marriage and death. (Mr. Myers saw entries of these dates in Mrs. Claughton's pocket book). He desired Mrs. Claughton to go to Meresby and verify these dates in the registers, and, if found correct, to go to the church at the ensuing 1.15 a.m. and wait at the grave therein, (S.W. corner of S. aisle) of Richard Hart died—; aetat—. She was to verify this reference also in the registers. He said her railway ticket would not be taken, and she was to send it along with a white rose from his grave to Dr. Ferrier. Said Joseph Wright, a dark man, to whom she should describe him, would help her. That she would lodge with a woman who would tell her that she had a child (drowned) buried in the same churchyard. When Mrs. Claughton had done all this, she should hear the rest of the history. Towards the end of the conversation, Mrs. Claughton saw a third phantom, of a man whose name she is not free

to give, in great trouble, standing with hands on face (which he afterwards lowered, showing face), behind Mrs. Blackburn's right. The three disappeared. Mrs. Cloughton rose and went to the door to look out at the clock, but was seized with faintness, returned and rang the bell. Mr. Buckley found her on the ground, she was able to ask the time, which was about 1.20.

The fact that Mrs. Cloughton went to Meresby is proved by the following letter from the Clerk of that parish, who in answer to inquiries, wrote on October 22, 1893, as follows:—"I am clerk of the Parish of Meresby. On Saturday evening, October 14th, a lady who gave the name of Cloughton, after going to several places for lodgings, came to my house, accompanied by porter and luggage. I accommodated the lady with lodgings. She told me that she wanted to look at the church registers, and did I think the curate would come and speak to her at my house. I told her I thought he would, as she would like to see them on Sunday. The lady then sent note by porter to curate, who was just going out to dinner, so did not come till about half-past eleven, when lady had retired to bed. He asked me to apologise to her for not coming before, but would be happy for her to see registers on Sunday morning after service. The lady came to morning service, and afterwards came to the vestry and asked for registers of Richard Hart and George Howard, also giving description of George Howard, which was quite correct; and dates of registers also corresponded with those in the lady's journal. I then showed her the tombstone of Richard Hart, and also the grave of George Howard. Curate refusing to assist lady any further, the lady asked me whether I would accompany her to the church at twenty minutes past

one Monday morning. I told her I could not give a decided answer just then, but would do so after evening service. Spoke to curate upon the matter after service. He told me that he should not have any more to do with it, but that I could do as I liked. I then told lady I would do as requested. At a quarter to one o'clock I called her. We then proceeded to the church, and after looking all around the interior, I left the lady in the church at twenty past one o'clock in total darkness, locking the door on the outside. At twenty minutes to two o'clock, by the lady's request, I gave three slight taps on the door, unlocked it, when the lady came out. We then went to grave of George Howard, where the lady plucked some roses. We then returned, reaching home at about two o'clock.

(Signed) Joseph Wright,  
Parish Clerk.

Meresby Oct. 22. 1893."

Mrs. Claughton dictated, (in the third person), to the Marquis of Bute, a detailed account of her ghostly experiences, which concludes by describing her experiences in the church. "To church with Joseph Wright at 1 a.m., with whom searched interior and found it empty. At 1.20 was locked in alone, having no light; had been told to take Bible, but had only Church-service," (which she had left in the vestry in the morning.) "Waited near grave of Richard Hart. Felt no fear. Received communication, but does not feel free to give any detail. No light. History begun at Blake Street then completed. Was directed to take another white rose from George Howard's grave, and give it personally to his daughter (unmarried, living at Hart Hall), and to remark on her likeness to him. About 1.45 Joseph Wright knocked

and let Mrs. Claughton out. Went to George Howard's grave and gathered rose for Miss Howard, as had been directed. Home and bed, and slept well for the first time since first seeing Mrs. Blackburn. Called on Miss Howard and recognised strong likeness to her father: carried out all things desired by the dead to the full, as had been requested. Has had no communication from any of them since. Nothing since has appeared in Blake Street. The wishes expressed to her were not illogical or unreasonable, as the ratiocination of dreams often appears, but perfectly rational, reasonable, and of natural importance."

A gentleman, named Johnson, of Barton, was asked by Dr. Ferrier to inquire at Meresby as to Mrs. Claughton's proceedings. To this gentleman, or to some other inquirer, the Clerk of Meresby stated that Mrs. Claughton had described 'one of the local ghosts,' apparently Mr. Howard, as he was when alive, correctly. The clerk also corroborated the fact of Mrs. Claughton's visit to Miss Howard. The various predictions of the ghosts concerning the events of her journey were all fulfilled; her railway ticket was not given up, and she subsequently sent it to Dr. Ferrier; the Railway Company on being asked replied by letter that only one ticket had been issued for that train from London to Meresby.

Mr. Myers wrote, "The narrative is of an unusual and complex type. Its main purport is concerned with a continued knowledge of terrene affairs evinced by a departed spirit. But this, the kernel of the case, must be kept entirely secret, for reasons affecting survivors; which reasons, as far as I can judge from a very partial knowledge of them, are entirely sufficient. For the same reasons the names, (*all of which are known to me*) have had to

be altered throughout, and various details omitted. Thus deprived of its central significance the narrative presents the following type."

(Summary of details already given.)

"This whole story is no doubt very different from the usual tenor of our (S.P.R.) narratives, and much more resembles some of the figments of romance. On the other hand the evidence for the external facts of the narrative is absolutely conclusive. There is no doubt whatever that Mrs. Claughton did make the journey to Meresby, giving as her reason some message conveyed to her on an occasion when she was undoubtedly found fainting in the middle of the night. There is no doubt that at Meresby she obtained admission to the church at a similar hour of the night; nor that after so visiting the church she paid certain other visits to persons previously strangers to her.

"Nor has any explanation due either to self-interest or to insanity been suggested, so far as I can discover, by any of the persons concerned. The whole expedition was a source merely of trouble and embarrassment to Mrs. Claughton, who left a sick child to attend to the alleged injunction, under circumstances of much inconvenience, and with no possible advantage to herself. An explanation from insanity or hysterical desire for notoriety is equally untenable. Mrs. Claughton is a widow lady, moving in good society, with children growing up, and known to many persons as a cheerful, capable, active woman, who has seen much of the world, and has plenty of business of her own to attend to:—and who is by no means given to dwelling on things morbid or mysterious. She has, indeed, had some previous experiences of apparitions, which all appear

to have been veridical, but she has paid little attention to them, and has never sought to encourage such visitations in any way. This present adventure she kept as quiet as she could; but other people had heard vaguely of it, and she was annoyed by distorted versions; so that she ultimately consented to give to the Marquis of Bute, and through him to our Society, her own account of such incidents, as she did not for the sake of survivors, feel bound to conceal."

Mr. Andrew Lang, who as we have seen, was not impressed at the outset by the evidential value of the story, seems to have remained in that sceptical frame of mind until the Railway Company and the Parish Clerk, confirmed the truth of Mrs. Cloughton's statements concerning her visit to Meresby. He finally sums up the matter as follows:—"Of this story the only conceivable natural explanation is that Mrs. Cloughton, to serve her private ends, paid secret preliminary visits to Meresby, 'got up' there a number of minute facts, chose a haunted house at the other end of England as a first scene in her little drama, and made the rest of the troublesome journeys, not to mention the uncomfortable visit to a dark church at midnight, and did all this from an hysterical love of notoriety. This desirable boon she would probably never have obtained, even as far as it is consistent with a pseudonym, if I had not chanced to dine with Dr. Ferrier while the adventure was only beginning. Two years later Mrs. Cloughton consented to tell the Society for Psychical Research as much as she thinks it fair to reveal. This, it will be confessed, is a roundabout way of obtaining fame.—There I leave those ghosts, my mind being in a just balance of agnosticism. If ghosts at all, they were ghosts with a purpose. The species is very rare."



Mr. Myers comments on the subject of apparitions as follows:—

“We have no warrant for the assumption that the phantom seen, even though it be *somehow caused* by a deceased person, *is* that deceased person, in any ordinary sense of the word. Instead of appealing to the crude analogy of the living friend who, when he has walked into the room, *is* in the room; we shall find for the ghost a much closer parallel in those hallucinary figures or phantasms which living persons can sometimes project at a distance. When Baron von Notzing, for instance, caused by an effort of will an apparition of himself to a waking percipient, out of sight; he was himself awake and conscious in the place where, not his phantom, but his body stood. Whatever, then, that phantom *was*,—however generated or conditioned,—we cannot say it was *himself*. And equally unjustifiable must be the common parlance which speaks of the ghost as though it were the decedent himself—a *revenant* coming back amongst living men.”

All this, of course, will be already familiar to most of my readers, and only needs repetition here because experience shows that when,—as with these *post-mortem* phantoms,—the decedent has gone well out of sight and reach, there is a fresh tendency (so to say) to *anthropomorphise* the apparition; to suppose that, as the decedent is not provably anywhere else, he is probably here; and that the apparition is bound to behave accordingly. All such assumptions must be dismissed, and the phantom must be taken on its merits, as indicating merely a certain connection with the decedent, the precise nature of that connection being a part of the problem to be solved.

And—just as we cease to say that the phantom *is* the decedent, so also must we cease to ascribe to

the phantom, the motives by which we imagine that the decedent might be swayed. We must therefore exclude from our definition of a ghost any words which assume its intention to communicate with the living. It may bear such a relation to the decedent that it can reflect or represent his presumed wish to communicate, or it may not. If, for instance, its relation to his *post-mortem* life be like the relation of my dreams to my earthly life, it may represent little that is truly his, save such vague memories and instincts as give a dim individuality to each man's trivial dreams.

Let us attempt, then, a truer definition. Instead of describing a 'ghost' as a dead person permitted to communicate with the living, let us define it as *a manifestation of persistent personal energy*;—or as an indication that some kind of force is being exercised after death, which is in some way connected with a person previously known on earth. In this definition we have eliminated, as will be seen, a great mass of popular assumptions. Yet we must introduce a further proviso, lest our definition still seem to imply an assumption which we have no right to make. It is theoretically possible that this force or influence which after a man's death, creates a phantasmal impression of him, may indicate no continuing action on his part, but may be some residue of the force or energy which he generated while yet alive. There may be veridical *after-images*:—such as Mr. Gurney hints at (*Proceedings* Vol., p. 417), when in his comments on the recurring figure of an old woman;—seen on the bed where she was murdered,—he remarked that this figure suggests 'not so much any continuing local action on the part of the deceased person, as the survival of a mere image, impressed, we cannot guess how, by that

person's physical organism ; and perceptible at times to those endowed with some cognate form of sensitiveness.'

Strange as this notion may seem, it is strongly suggested by many of the cases of *haunting* which do not fall within the scope of the present paper. It will be remembered that Mrs. Sidgwick's paper on *Phantasms of the Dead*, brought out the fact that there is strong evidence for the recurrence of the same hallucinatory figures in the same localities ; but weak evidence to indicate any purpose in most of these figures, or any connection with bygone individuals, or with such tragedies as are popularly supposed to start a ghost on its career. In some of these cases of frequent meaningless recurrence of a figure in a given spot, we are driven to wonder whether it can be some decedent's past frequentation of that spot, rather than any fresh action of his after death, which has generated what I have termed the veridical after-image,—veridical in the sense that it communicates information, previously unknown to the percipient, as to a former inhabitant of the haunted locality.

"Such are some of the questions which our evidence suggests. And I may point out that the very fact that such bizarre problems should present themselves at every turn, does in a certain sense tend to show that these apparitions are not purely subjective things,—do not originate merely in the percipient's imagination. For they are not like what any man would have imagined. What man's mind tends to fancy on such topics may be seen in the endless crop of fictitious ghost-stories ; which furnish, indeed, a curious proof of the persistence of preconceived notions. For they go on being framed according to canons of their own, and deal with a set of imaginary phenomena quite

different from those which actually occur. The actual phenomena I may add could scarcely be made romantic. One true 'ghost-story' is apt to be very like another; and all to be fragmentary, and apparently meaningless. Their meaning, that is to say, lies in their conformity, not to the mythopoeic instinct of mankind, which fabricates and enjoys the fictitious tales; but to some unknown law, not based on human sentiment or convenience at all.

"And thus, absurdly enough, we sometimes hear men ridicule the phenomena which actually do happen, simply because those phenomena do not suit their preconceived notions of what ghostly phenomena ought to be; not perceiving that this very divergence, this very unexpectedness, is itself no slight indication of an origin *outside* the minds which obviously were so far from anticipating anything of the kind." *Proceedings* Vol. VI.

## CHAPTER X

### POLTERGEISTS

THE word Poltergeist signifies a *noisy-ghost*, or *hooligan-spirit*; and is applied to the type of haunting exemplified in the occurrences at Epworth Rectory which are vividly described in contemporary letters by various members of the Wesley family. Similar disturbances have been recorded as taking place in all parts of the world, and in ancient as well as modern times, both in civilized and uncivilized regions. Loud noises are heard; stones, live coals, burning sticks, and all sorts of pieces of furniture are thrown about, and in almost every instance the disturbances seem to centre round the person of a young girl or boy. (It may be noted in passing that a rather large proportion of those described in the New Testament as being diabolically possessed were boys and girls).

The sole cause may be deliberate and intentional trickery on the part of individual boys and girls. But if so it is rather difficult to explain how, by extraordinary coincidence, ill-educated and unread children reproduce again and again a certain type of trickery, which it seems certain they can never have read of or heard of. Some people are inclined to think that what I may term *poltergeisting* is a form

of hysteria, in which the agent is partly conscious, and partly unconscious of the various impish tricks he or she plays. This would make it a physical matter caused by a derangement of the nervous system or of the brain; and this might account for the similarity of the phenomena, as in the case of other mental and nervous diseases.

Of modern instances one of the best known is the Worksop case, which was carefully investigated by Mr. F. Podmore a few weeks after the events had taken place; his report being published in S.P.R. *Proceedings* Vol. XII.

On Saturday, April 7th, 1883, Mr. F. Podmore went to Worksop, (as he stated in a report dated April 11, 1883,) "with the intention of inspecting the actual scene of the occurrences, and of personally interrogating the principal witnesses; in order if possible to arrive at some rational explanation of the business. I spent the Saturday evening and the whole of the following day in my inquiries, and have I think obtained as intelligible and trustworthy a history of the matter as the lapse of time, the nature of the phenomena themselves, and the character of the witnesses will permit." After describing the house and its surroundings, Mr. Podmore continued, "The history of the disturbances, as gathered from the various witnesses whom I interrogated, appears to be briefly as follows:—

"Nothing remarkable had been heard or seen in the house until about the 20th or 21st of February, 1883, when, as Mrs. White was alone with two of the children in the kitchen one evening, washing up the tea things at the table, the table tilted up at a considerable angle; the candle was upset, and the wash-tub only saved by Mrs. White holding it. She positively assured me that she exerted no pressure whatever

upon the table, and the whole incident struck her as very extraordinary. Her husband made light of it at the time.

“On Monday, February 26th, White was absent from home until the Wednesday afternoon. On the Monday his wife allowed a girl, Eliza Rose, the child of an imbecile mother, to come into the house and share her bed at night. White returned on Wednesday night, but left on the following morning until Friday afternoon. During that one night the girl slept on the squab sofa, downstairs. On Thursday night, March 1st, at about 11 p.m., Tom White, (brother of Joe White, the owner of the house), went up to bed—the children having gone up some hours before. At about 11.30, Mrs. White and Eliza Rose being then alone in the kitchen, various things such as a corkscrew, clothes pegs, a salt-cellar, etc., which had been in the kitchen only a few minutes before, came tumbling step by step down the stairs. Tom solemnly and positively denied having thrown the articles, and the mystery was increased when at least twenty minutes after he had gone upstairs (again) no one having left the room in the interval, some *hot* coals were thrown down.

“On the following night, March 2nd, at about the same hour—White, Mrs. White, and Rose being in the kitchen—a noise was heard as of someone coming down the passage (outside) and stopping just outside the outer door. White told Rose to open the door, but she was too frightened to do so. Then they heard a surcingle and immediately afterwards some pieces of carpet thrown down the stairs. Then followed some knives and forks and other things. The girl picked them up; but they followed still faster. White then left the room to go up to Tom. During his absence one of the ornaments flew off the

mantelpiece into the corner of the room near the door. Nothing was seen by the two women ; but they heard it fall, and found it there. Their screams summoned White down ; as he entered the room his candle went out, and something struck him on the forehead. The girl picked up the candle—which appears to have left the candlestick—and two new ones which had not been in the house previously, from the ground, and as soon as a candle was lit, a little china woman left the mantelpiece, and flew into the corner where it was seen by White. As soon as it was replaced it flew across the room again and was broken. Other things followed, and the women being very frightened, and White thinking that the disturbances presaged the death of his child, who was very ill with an abscess in the back, sent Tom (who was afraid to go alone), with Ford, (who seems to have been passing), to fetch the doctor. Mrs. White meanwhile took one of the children next door. Rose approached the inner room to fetch another, when things immediately began to fly about and smash themselves in that room. After this all appear to have been absent from the house for a short time. White then returned, with Higgs, a policeman, and whilst they were alone in the kitchen, standing near the door, a glass jar flew out of the cupboard into the yard ; a tumbler also fell from a chest of drawers into the kitchen, when only Higgs was near it. Both then went into the inner room, and found the chest of drawers there turned up on end and smashed. On their return they found Rose, Wass, (the next door neighbour), and Tom White in the kitchen, and all saw a cream jug, which Rose had just placed on the bin, fly four feet up in the air and smash on the floor. Dr. Lloyd and Mrs. White then entered, and in the presence of all these witnesses, a basin was seen to



rise slowly from the bin—no person being near it except Dr. Lloyd and Higgs. It touched the ceiling, and then fell suddenly to the floor, and was smashed. This was at 12 p.m. All then left except Tom White and his brother. The disturbances continued until 2 a.m., when all grew quiet, and the Whites slept. At about 8 a.m. on Saturday, the 3rd. the disturbances began again.

“White left the kitchen to attend to some pigs; and in his absence, Mrs White and Rose were left alone in the kitchen. A nearly empty port wine bottle leaped up from the table about four feet in the air, and fell into a bucket of milk, standing on the table, from which Mrs White was filling some jugs. Then Currass appears to have been attracted to the scene. He entered with White, young Wass, and others, and viewed the inner room. They had but just returned to the kitchen, leaving the inner room empty, and the door of communication open, when the American clock, which hung over the bed was heard to strike. (It had not done so for 18 months previously.) A crash was then heard, and Currass, who was nearest the door, looked in, and found that the clock had fallen over the bed—about four feet broad—and was lying on the floor. Shortly afterwards—no one being near it—a china dog flew off the mantelpiece, and smashed itself in the corner near the door. Currass and some others then left.

“A plate, a cream jug, and some other things, then flew up in the air, and smashed themselves in view of all who were in the kitchen. White then lay down on the sofa; but disturbances continued during his siesta. In particular, some pictures on the wall next the pantry began to move, but were taken down at once by his brother. At about 2 p.m. a Salvation Army woman came in and talked to White. A

candlestick flew from the bin, and fell behind the Salvation Army woman as she stood near the pantry door. She left the room in terror.

"Other things then followed at intervals. A full medicine bottle fell without breaking. An empty medicine bottle and a lamp-glass fell and broke themselves. It was then about 4 p.m. and White could stand it no longer. He told the girl she must go; she did in fact leave before 5 p.m. After her departure nothing whatever of an abnormal character took place, and the house has remained undisturbed up to the present time. (April 7, 1883.)

"With regard to the position of the persons present, in relation to the objects moved, it may be stated generally that there was no possibility in most cases of the objects having been thrown by hand. . . The objects were frequently moved in a remote corner of the room, or even in an adjoining room. Moreover the character of the movements, in many cases, was such as to preclude the possibility of the objects having been thrown.

"Of course the obvious explanation of these occurrences is trickery on the part of some of the persons present. In regard to this it seems to me a matter of very little significance that most of the educated people in Worksop believe White himself to have caused the disturbance. For most educated persons, as we know, would not be ready to admit any other than a mechanical explanation. . . . But whilst believing White to be at the bottom of the matter, none of the persons with whom I conversed were prepared with any explanation of his *modus operandi*. That he should have thrown the things was universally admitted to be impossible. And beyond this, I could discover little more than an unquestioning faith in the omnipotence of electricity.

No one professed to have any idea of what mechanical means could have been employed, or how they could have been adapted to the end in view. Still less did anyone pretend to have discovered any indications in the house itself of any machinery being used. (I looked all over the house in daylight, but could discern no holes in the walls or ceilings, nor any trace of the extensive and elaborate machinery which would have been required to produce the movements by mechanical means.) Moreover, there was a total absence of any apparent motive on White's part. . . . Whilst he was unquestionably a considerable loser—to the extent of nearly £9 as estimated by himself—by the articles broken, he appears to have reaped no corresponding advantage.

“Again, had White himself been the principal agent in the matter, it is clear that he must have had two confederates, for he was not himself present during the disturbances on the Thursday night—which might indeed have been caused by his brother Tom—nor was either he or his brother present during some of the occurrences on the following day. Moreover, it is hard to conceive by what mechanical appliances, under the circumstances described, the movements could have been effected. . . . The objects thrown about in the kitchen moved generally, but by no means always, in the direction of the outer door. And it is noticeable that, in most cases, they do not appear to have been thrown, but in some manner borne or wafted across the room; for though they fell on a stone floor 15ft. or 16ft. distant, they were often unbroken, and were rarely shattered. And it is impossible to reconcile the account given of the movement of some other objects, variously described (by the witnesses,) as ‘jerky,’

'twirling,' and 'turning over and over,' with the supposition that the objects depended on any fixed support, or were in any way suspended.

"Lastly, to suppose that these various objects were all moved by mechanical contrivances, argues incredible stupidity, amounting almost to imbecility on the part of all the persons present who were not in the plot. . . . Not only so, but Currass, Higgs, and Dr. Lloyd, all independent observers, assured me that they examined some of the objects which had been moved, immediately after the occurrence, with the express intention of discovering . . . any clue to an explanation of the matter, but entirely failed to do so."

*Statement by Joe White.*—"A fair witness. I think that he always intended to speak the truth, but that occasionally his memory proved treacherous. In all important points, however, he was corroborated by his wife, (an excellent witness), Higgs, and Currass." F. Podmore.)

"I returned home about 7 on the Friday night, (March 2nd.) I had been absent from home on Monday and Tuesday nights; and it was during my absence that my wife took in the girl Rose, who shared her bed in the front inner room. I slept at home on Wednesday, and the girl then slept on the squab in the kitchen. I left again on Thursday morning, and returned as mentioned on the Friday. When told by my wife and Tom what had happened on Thursday night, I said someone must have been tricking, and didn't think much about it. But I chaffed the lass (Rose) a good deal for she was much frightened.

"About 11.30 on Friday evening, when my wife, the girl, and I were alone in the kitchen, just going up to bed, I heard a noise as if someone had come down

the passage between the two houses, and were standing just outside our door. They didn't knock, but I said to Rose, 'Go and see who's there.' But she was frightened and didn't go. Then presently, a lot of things came rattling down the stairs. I don't know what came first: but a lot of things came—a surcingle, bits of carpet, knives and forks, a corkscrew, etc. The girl went to pick them up and put them on the table, and just as fast as she put them on, more things came down. Then my wife said to me, 'The salt cellar came down last night, but you won't have it down to-night, for here it is on the table.' She was using it at the time for salting Tom's dinner for next day. She had hardly said this, when the salt cellar flew off the table, and into the corner near the outer door. Rose was in that corner, and not near the table: my wife was at the table, but certainly didn't touch the cellar. I saw the thing go, though I couldn't believe my eyes. My wife didn't see it go, but we both saw it as it struck the wall in the corner. All the salt was spilled out of it. I fairly couldn't believe my own eyes; but I couldn't help thinking it must be Tom. So I went upstairs and told him to leave off. 'Thoul't frighten our Liz to death.' He said, 'It's not me, Joe. I'll take my oath it isn't. I've never thrown nowt down.' Whilst I was still talking I heard a crash downstairs; and the women screamed; and my wife cried 'Come down, Joe.' As I was just coming into the room the candle which I held in my hand went out—I don't know how at all—and we were left in darkness, except for the firelight. Then something hit me on the forehead, and I cried out, 'Who threw that?' Then there was a crash in the corner. I found out when we had a light again that the salt cellar had fallen into the corner again, and

broken itself. Then I found out that the candle was not in the candlestick, and asked where it was. I told the girl to look for it, and then she felt among the things at the bottom of the stairs and picked up *three* candles, two of them quite new. We had only *two* candles in the house, (Mrs. White expressly confirmed this.—F. P.) which had been bought just before, and both were partly burnt. I lit the old ones and left the new ones on the table; but they disappeared afterwards, and I have never seen them since.

“When the candle was lit again, I saw the little china woman jump off from the mantelpiece, and go into the same corner. It fell on its side, and then righted itself, and stood upright, unbroken. I distinctly saw it go through the air; it passed near me as I stood about the middle of the room. None of us were near the mantelpiece. I picked it up, and presently it fell into the corner again, and broke itself. Then the tea-caddy and the candle-stick, all from the mantelpiece, followed. Then I went out and found George Ford (‘Buck Ford’) and asked him to fetch Dr. Lloyd for the child—for they had told me that all this disturbance meant the death of the child, who was very ill with an abscess in its back.

“Then I got my wife to take the little lad out, and lay him next door, he lying on the squab in the kitchen at the time. (Mrs. White said he was in the inner room, F.P.). Rose went with her, and they took all the children with them. Before going Rose had to go into the inner room, and then things began to fly about there and make a disturbance. All had been quiet before. I went after the others into the next house and stayed there some little time. When I came back, I found police-constable Higgs in the kitchen. He and I were alone there. (Rose all this

time was next door). We heard a crash in the inner room, and we went in—Solomon, Wass and Tom, who had just entered, with us, and Higgs with his lantern—and we found the chest of drawers turned up on end, and the lustres and looking glass, and everything else that had been on it, in pieces on the floor. Then we came back into the kitchen, and we saw the cupboard door open, and a big glass jar flew out, and flew into the yard and broke itself. Also some things flew off the bin at the side of the door, from the end near the fire; and they pitched in the corner, and then went out into the yard. Things often pitched on the floor by the door first, and then got up again and flew out into the yard.

“Then doctor Lloyd came in with my wife, and Higgs showed him what had happened in the inner room. Then when we had got into the kitchen again, and were all standing near the door of the inner room—Higgs, my wife, and Tom, and Wass, and Lloyd—who was about six feet from the bin, and the nearest to it of our party—we all saw a basin which was lying on the bin near the door get up two or three times in the air, rising slowly a few inches or perhaps a foot, and then falling plump. (Mrs. White corroborated this, and so did Mr. Wass, the next door neighbour, who was present. F.P.) Then it got up higher and went slowly, wobbling as it went, up to the ceiling, it fell down all at once and broke itself. (During this scene the room was lighted by one candle, Higgs’ lantern, and a blazing fire; so the light was pretty good). Dr. Lloyd then looked in the bin, saying the devil must be in the house, and then left. All the others shortly afterwards left, Mrs. W., Rose, and the children stopping in the next house. Tom and I sat in the chairs on either side of the fire until the next morning at 8 a.m. Things kept on moving

every now and then until about 2 a.m., and then all was quiet, and we got to sleep a bit. At about 8 a.m. I had to go out to see after a pig which had been pigging, and then things began again; and a lot of folks came in to see about it. Currass came in, and I went in with him into the inner room and showed him the chest of drawers, he and I alone; we came out leaving the door open—I am quite sure it was open—and I was sitting near the fire, and Currass was just inside the kitchen, not far from the open door, when Wass's little lad, who was sitting at the table, said, 'There's the clock striking,' meaning the big clock which hung over our bed. I couldn't hear it, and I said it was a lie. Just then we heard a crash, and I asked what it was, and Currass looked round, and said it was the American clock had fallen right across the bed, and lay on the floor at the foot, with its bottom knocked out. Then I took it into the yard. I think—indeed I am sure, that Coulter was not here when all this happened. The other clock fell and was broken, but whether before or after I can't remember, and he may have seen that. I don't remember where the girl Rose was when the American clock fell. She may have been in the kitchen, but she certainly wasn't in the inner room; no one was in that room I am sure. I don't remember saying just at that time, though I often did say, that wherever she went the things smashed.

“After that Currass and I and one or two others were standing near to the outer door talking, when the china dogs, or one of them, flew off the mantelpiece and smashed; and lots of things kept flying into the corner and smashing. Then I was tired, and lay down on the squab; but things kept moving. I was told some pictures on the wall began to move, but I didn't see them. At about 2 p.m. a Salvation Army



woman came in and was talking to me as I lay on the squab; she stood near the inner door; Rose was near the outer door. There were two candlesticks on the bin, at the end near the fireplace. Suddenly something dropped behind the Salvation Army woman. No one saw it going through the air; but we turned round and found it was one of the brass candlesticks. It was half balanced on the small end, where the candle goes, and was wobbling round on the end. Then the Salvation Army woman said 'I must go;' and she went.

"Then a little after, when Rose was going to lay down the carpet, and no one else was in the room, a medicine bottle, full, fell from the bin on to the roll of carpet, about three or four yards off, and was broken. A lamp glass had fallen several times without breaking; but at last that fell and broke. Then an empty bottle flew off the mantelpiece. That was one of the last things that happened. Well then, I couldn't stand it any longer. Wherever the lass seemed to go, things seemed to fly about. So I said to her, 'You'll have to go.' She began to roar. But my wife gave her some tea, and she went. That was between 4 and 5 p.m., very soon after the last disturbance. Nothing happened after she left. We sat up in the kitchen that evening, a lot of us—but nothing happened at all.

(Signed) Joseph White.

New Building Ground, Worksop. April, 8th 1883."

*Statement of Police Constable Higgs.* ('A man of good intelligence, and believed to be entirely honest. Fully alive, as becomes his official position, to White's indifferent reputation, but unable to account for what he saw. F. Podmore').

"On the night of Friday March 2nd, I heard of

the disturbances at Joe White's house from his young brother Tom. I went round to the house at 11.55 p.m., as near as I can judge, and found Joe White in the kitchen of his house. There was one candle lighted in the room, and a good fire burning, so that one could see things pretty clearly. The cupboard doors were open, and White went and shut them, and then came and stood against the chest of drawers. I stood near the outer door. No one else was in the room at the time. White had hardly shut the cupboard doors when they flew open, and a large glass jar came out past me, and pitched in the yard outside, smashing itself. I didn't see the jar leave the cupboard, or fly through the air; it went too quick. But I am quite sure that it wasn't thrown by White or any one else. White couldn't have done it without my seeing him. The jar couldn't go in a straight line from the cupboard out of the door; but it certainly did go.

"Then White asked me to come and see the things which had been smashed in the inner room. He led the way and I followed. As I passed the chest of drawers in the kitchen I noticed a tumbler standing on it. Just after I passed I heard a crash, and looking round, I saw that the tumbler had fallen on the ground in the direction of the fireplace, and was broken. I don't know how it happened. There was no one else in the room.

"I went into the inner room, and saw the bits of pots and things on the floor, and then I came back with White into the kitchen. The girl Rose had come into the kitchen during our absence. She was standing with her back against the bin near the fire. There was a cup standing on the bin, rather nearer the door. She said to me, 'Cup'll go soon; it has been down three times already.' She then pushed

it a little further on the bin, and turned round and stood talking to me by the fire. She had hardly done so, when the cup jumped up suddenly about four or five feet into the air, and then fell on the floor and smashed itself. White was sitting on the other side of the fire.

"Then Mrs. White came in with Dr. Lloyd ; also Tom White and Solomon Wass. After they had been in two or three minutes, something else happened. Tom White and Wass were standing with their backs to the fire, just in front of it Eliza Rose and Dr. Lloyd were near them, with their backs turned towards the bin, the Doctor nearer to the door. I stood by the drawers, and Mrs. White was by me near the inner door. Then suddenly a basin, which stood on the end of the bin near the door, got up into the air, turning over and over as it went. It went up not very quickly, not as quickly as if it had been thrown. When it reached the ceiling it fell plump and smashed. I called Dr. Lloyd's attention to this, and we all saw it. No one was near it, and I don't know how it happened. I stayed about ten minutes more, but saw nothing else. I don't know what to make of it all. I don't think White or the girl could possibly have done the things which I saw.

(Signed) William Higgs, G. E. 30.

April 10th, 1883."

The signed testimony of other eye-witnesses is omitted here, but can be found in *Proceedings* XII.

The Worksof case certainly adds weight to the dictum of Mr. Weller, senior, 'Nothing like an alleybi, Sammy, nothing.' If Joe White, Mrs. White, Tom White, and Eliza Rose had stood in the dock on the charge of causing these disturbances, each

one of them by the testimony of competent witnesses could have proved an alibi. When the table moved on February 21, Mrs. White was alone in the kitchen with her children: (it would be interesting to know if Eliza Rose had been in the house recently): and during the disturbances on March 1, Joe White was away from home. On the night of March 2-3, though they were all four in the house when the disturbances recommenced, Mrs. White, Tom, and the girl were all out of the house when White and Higgs the policeman saw the glass jar emerge from the cupboard and take a circuitous course to the door. When the tumbler fell off the chest of drawers in the kitchen, the kitchen itself was empty, and Higgs was standing between White and the door leading into it.

If the various crashes and smashes were the result of fraud and trickery, it must have been from a conspiracy of fraud and trickery. A complicated system of wires and pulleys must have been established through the walls and ceilings of the house, and much practice would presumably have been required before the conspirators attained the degree of perfection they exhibited to the astonished spectators on March 1, and 2. We must also suppose that Dr. Lloyd, Higgs, Wass, Currass, Coulter, and others, standing in amongst the guilty four, and often between them and the articles which flew about, all entirely failed to see the wires and pulleys or other apparatus necessary to—for instance—raise a basin up to the ceiling, and then dash it down and break it. And we must further suppose that apparatus was removed, and all traces of it on the walls and ceilings obliterated, before Mr. Podmore inspected the house early in April. And lastly we are bound to suggest some motive which

would cause these four people to take all this trouble. In dealing with one person alone, there is always the possibility that the only motive may be the morbid desire for notoriety often found in hysterical and diseased minds. But four people can hardly be supposed to have had a collective and identical mania for attracting attention. On the whole I venture to think that the charge of conspiracy to trick, against all four; as well as a charge of trickery against each individual, would in a court of law have resulted in a verdict exonerating the accused.

Another case of which I will now proceed to give a summarized account, is, on the information given, almost equally difficult to explain: but as we have to rely for details mainly on the account of one person, himself not an eyewitness of the whole; and as no S.P.R. expert investigated the matter on the spot shortly afterwards, the case of Mary the Housemaid cannot be considered to be as well authenticated as the Worksop case.

I have abbreviated the case of Mary the Housemaid from the full account published in *Proceedings* Volume VII.

Information concerning the following case was furnished by the owner of the house in question: his household consisted of four deaf pupils, a lady-housekeeper, a cook, and a housemaid: the last named had only been in the house a few weeks when the events related began to take place.

Writing on Nov. 1, 1887, Mr. D. stated:—"On Friday Sept. 23, (1887), I took my four pupils to a circus, my lady housekeeper going too, leaving my two servants at home. . . . All but myself returned at about 5.30, and found the two servants on the doorstep,—and explaining that all the bells were

ringing violently, no one touching them, and they had been doing so almost ever since we left, from about half-past two. When I came back I found the same state of things; the servants almost in hysterics, and the bells ringing. . . The ringing was sudden and very violent—I thought the probability was that a cat had got somewhere where all the bells were together, had got entangled, and—so pulled the bells. I put it down to some such cause, and so felt no trouble in leaving the house, as I had an evening engagement, my housekeeper and I both going out to supper. I left first, and when she came to the friend's house she said the last thing she had heard was all the bells pealing together. . . At about 9.30. . . the cook came over to say we must come back as there were such dreadful knockings going on in the house. We went off at once of course, our friends returning with us, being much interested. What had occurred in the meanwhile was this: at about 7.30. the knocking or hammering began. It sounded like a mallet on a wooden floor. The laundry man came in soon after it began, and was I believe quite scared; he offered to stay in the house till the cook went for her brother, who lives near; and she fetched him. The baker's man also came, and was convinced that there was a man in the house hammering, and after searching the house and finding nothing he went to the police station and told them to send up. As soon as she had fetched her brother the cook went for us, and her brother, who is I should say an intelligent man, a teacher in a Board-school, was so scared by the knocking that he would not stay in the house, but went on the doorstep, with the housemaid, and stood there till the policemen came, the noise going on all the time. When I came back I

had the felicity of finding three policemen in the house, and the noise had ceased."

In the course of the night the loud knocking recommenced; and Mr. D. when he heard it was convinced that the housemaid, (whom they all suspected and watched), "could not have made such a noise with a hammer, even if she had tried." Investigations by a bell-hanger "proved that the bellwires separated directly they left the bells and ran each to its own particular part of the house, and thus entirely knocked on the head the cat or rat theory; since there was no point anywhere where more than three wires ran at all near one another after leaving the bells, where they were in full view. It would, I suppose, if there were no other reason to preclude the idea, have taken at the very least four separate animals ringing in concert."

Mr. D. gave many more minute details at great length; which certainly seem to prove that trickery was impossible.

Meanwhile the bells continued to ring, and the knocks continued to be heard, whilst the movements of the pupils, of the cook, and of Mary the housemaid, were carefully scrutinised.

Then for a time, (some weeks apparently), quietness reigned; and Mr. D. went away for a week-end, on Saturday, November 5. That same evening the bell-ringing re-commenced, and continued; whilst Mrs. K. and the cook were up all night with Mary, who was ill and delirious. The next day, Sunday, a new phenomenon commenced. Chairs were moved by invisible hands; in one instance up a few stairs; in another down some stairs; the distance traversed being about fifteen feet. Various articles left upon chairs were continually moved, and placed elsewhere. The bell-hanger

was sent for; also a friend who had promised his help in case of need; but in spite of their presence the chairs and other articles continued to be found in unexpected places. At 8.30 on Sunday evening they sent Mary home:—and all sounds ceased from that time; though she returned to the house next day.

Mr. D., writing on November 11, said, "I cannot help now connecting the occurrence with the housemaid; though perhaps, since there is no direct evidence to that effect, it may not appear so to others, and an outsider would be able to judge that better. Of course I do not want in the least to let her know I think this; though I am afraid she begins to suspect it herself at times, as she naturally, finding that the things never happen when she is away, puts things together, and has said it seems a strange thing it should be so. I am, as I have said, perfectly certain that she had nothing to do *voluntarily* with the bell ringing; indeed the more I think of it the more I am convinced that it would be literally impossible for her to ring the bells as they were rung, even apart from any necessity to conceal the method of doing so.

"If any proof of her freedom from complicity were needed, her state on the Saturday night would be enough to convince anyone. She was delirious all night, at least till four in the morning; she slept in Mrs. K's room, and Mrs. K. and the cook sat up with her all night, and had often to hold her down; at one time she got up and would have gone out of the room had she not been prevented; she was clearly asleep, though most of the time her eyes were wide open, I suppose in the ordinary somnambulist state. She talked incessantly all night, very much about the bells, etc., and in such a way as to show she was completely alarmed and terrified at it. She also



went through all her week's work, they said, talking about everything; and coming to Sunday she went through almost the whole of the Church Service, giving the responses, and always leaving time for the clergyman to do his part. She sang four hymns all through, intoned the *Te Deum*, went through the litany, and started on the (alternate verses of the) psalms, but I suppose did not remember them, for she did not complete them; then she left about twenty minutes for the sermon! They thought she had gone off to sleep, but she came out with an Amen, or something, which showed what had been the interval. Then she greeted her friends in her ordinary tone of voice; in fact she acted the whole of what she would have done at the time. She did, by the way, let out one small secret about her work which she would not willingly have done, so that I think anyone would be convinced that had she had any hand in the production of the phenomena she must have given a hint of it.

“One might have thought she moved the things in a somnambulic state; but they all feel certain that it would have been impossible for her to have come upstairs when they were perfectly within hearing, and almost within sight.” Mr. D., in another letter, also remarks upon the fact that Mary was standing outside the front door, with the cook's brother, for some time whilst the bells were ringing, and that he was certain she was not and could not be ringing them. And whilst the bells were ringing on the Sunday night Mrs. K. had the housemaid in the dining-room with her while the cook went for the bell-hanger, and while they were both in the dining-room the bath-room bell rang violently.

Mrs. K., the housekeeper, wrote as follows:—“Mr. D. having read over the account to me of the

occurrences which took place in this house, I find that they agree with my recollections entirely." April 3rd. 1890.

I have termed this the case of Mary the Housemaid because it seems on the whole most probable that she either voluntarily or involuntarily was the cause of the disturbances: but it is impossible to avoid questioning whether by any possibility the four deaf pupils had anything to do with it. If we accept the testimony of the bell-hanger concerning the bells, as summed up by Mr. D. in the dictum 'four separate animals ringing in concert' would have been needed to manipulate the chorus successfully, the thought of the four deaf pupils does certainly obtrude itself. They appear to have been out of the house on their way to the circus when the bells first commenced to ring, so if they had any responsibility we must suppose that before leaving they set some kind of machinery in motion which would start the bells ringing shortly afterwards. When the knocking commenced later in the evening the pupils were in the house, and as no one appears to have investigated whether they were really quiescent it is certainly possible that one or more of them may have caused the sounds, though one would not suppose deaf boys likely to trick in this particular way. When chairs and other articles were moved about later on, the boys were somewhere in the house; but as these movements in some instances took place within a known space of time, not exceeding apparently two or three minutes, one would suppose it necessary for a trickster to be much on the alert to *listen* for the slightest sound of returning footsteps in order to avoid detection.

On the whole I think that though it is not impossible the deaf boys, individually or collectively,

rang bells, thumped on floors, and moved chairs about; their infirmity makes it highly improbable that they could have done so without detection. The other possibility that the boys and Mary were in collusion, some ringing bells or knocking, whilst others were under observation, is rendered improbable by the fact that Mary had only recently come to the house.

Mary the Housemaid might conceivably have managed to move the chairs and other articles without detection, and she might possibly have knocked on the floors; but it is difficult, if not impossible to explain how she could ring the bells. For it must be remembered that during the night of November 5—6, the bell ringing continued whilst Mary was in a state of delirium and Mrs. K. and the cook were sitting with her. If any bell-hanger knows of a clock-work apparatus, so small as to escape notice, which can be fixed to a detached system of bells, and cause them to ring irregularly, individually and collectively, for hours without further attention, then we may suppose that Mary had become possessed of such an apparatus, and with great ingenuity fixed it and wound it up, subsequently simulating delirium to divert suspicion. But I think it is safe to say that failing the production of such an apparatus no judge and jury would consider the evidence strong enough to convict Mary on any of the counts; though the verdict as to raps and movements of chairs might be 'not proven,' the verdict as to ringing the bells would I think be an acquittal.

These two cases may be taken as fairly typical: other cases extraordinarily similar could be added literally by the dozen. In an article by Mr. Podmore in *Proceedings* Volume XII, eleven cases of Poltergeists are dealt with at length; in eight of these young

girls, and in three young boys appear to have been either mediums or tricksters. In most cases they are either physically or mentally abnormal, deformed, half-witted, hysterical, and in one case subject to spontaneous somnambulism. In some instances fire-raising occurs. It is undeniable that in many cases trickery has been discovered which wholly or in part accounted for the happenings. Most often after the phenomena had lessened or ceased the child has been caught in the act of producing sounds, or throwing coals about. But often there seems to have been an impression that these sounds, though similar, were not identical with those previously heard; and the suggestion has been made that when the supernatural sounds ceased, the child, liking the excitement, tried to reproduce them, but with indifferent success and speedy detection.

In *Proceedings XVIII*, Mr. Andrew Lang gave a detailed account of the Cideville Poltergeist, based on 'an authenticated copy of the original documents of what was practically a trial for witchcraft before the Juge de Paix, of Yerville, in 1851.' M. Tinel, Curé of Cideville, accused a man named Thorel of producing (by witchcraft) certain phenomena, which took place in his (M. Tinel's) house, in connection with two young boys, his pupils. Shovels and tongs danced round and then returned quietly to their usual places. 'Knives lying on a table would be hurled by some occult and irresistible force, and bury themselves deep in the walls.' And many other astonishing things happened, and were testified to by independent witnesses. The judge at the conclusion of the trial pronounced as follows:—'The most clear result of all the evidence is that the cause remains unknown.'

Mr. Lang remarks in characteristic fashion, 'The

experienced reader will see that, in the seventeenth century, Thorel would have been burned. The sceptic will be sure that the boys caused all the trouble because they were tired of staying with M. Tinel. The claim of (one witness) to have caught the younger boy in the act of cheating will be accepted, and all the affirmative evidence will be dismissed in the usual way. The present writer cannot form a conjecture as to how the things were done, but they are the ancient, traditional things, quae semper, quae ubique, quae ab omnibus. They are attested on oath by persons of various ranks, ages, and education; and the evidence is not remote from the time of the events. My one wish is that somebody would find a girl or boy who will, at least, attempt to produce the phenomena in the presence of a committee of the Society (for Psychical Research). If the things can be done so easily, will no young person do them?’

And in his book *Dreams and Ghosts*, in reference to the same subject, Mr. Lang wrote:—‘The question for the medical faculty is this: Does a decided taste for wilful fire-raising often accompany exhibitions of dancing furniture and crockery, gratuitously given by patients of hysterical temperament? This is quite a normal inquiry. Is there a nervous malady of which the symptoms are domestic arson and amateur leger-de-main? The complaint if it exist is of very old standing and wide prevalence, including Russia, Scotland, New England, France, Iceland, Germany, China and Peru.’

Professor William James wrote in *Proceedings* Volume XII:—‘I am not ashamed to confess that in my own case, although my *judgment* remains deliberately suspended, my *feeling* towards the way in which the phenomena of physical mediumship

should be approached has received from ghost—and disturbance—stories a distinctly charitable lurch. Science may keep on saying, 'such things are simply impossible'; yet so long as the stories multiply in different lands, and so few are positively explained away, it is bad method to ignore them. They should at least accrete for future use. As I glance back at my reading of the past few years (reading accidental as far as these stories go, since I have never followed up the subject), ten cases immediately rise to my mind.' Professor James enumerates these, they include the Swanland case. 'In all of these, if memory doesn't deceive me, material objects are said to have been witnessed by many persons moving through the air in broad daylight. Often the objects are multitudinous—in some instances they were stones showered through windows and down chimneys. More than once it was noted that they fell gently, and touched the ground without shock. Apart from the exceptionality of the reputed occurrences, their mutual resemblances suggest a natural type, and I confess that until these records, or others, like them, are positively explained away, I cannot feel (in spite of vast amounts of detected fraud) as if the case against physical mediumship itself as a freak of nature were definitely closed.'

Professor Sir William Barrett, who has not only closely studied records, but has also personally investigated Poltergeist cases whilst in actual progress, in an article in *Proceedings* XXV stated, 'I found that when I *mentally* asked for a given number of raps, no word being spoken, the response was given promptly and correctly, and this four times in succession, a different number being silently asked for in each case. . . The movement of objects is

usually quite unlike that due to gravitational or other attraction. They slide about, rise in the air, move in eccentric paths, sometimes in a leisurely manner, often turn round in their career, and usually descend quietly without hurting the observers.'

We may readily allow that the trickiness of a morbid and unhealthy child is only limited by its mechanical ability, and that Poltergeist phenomena consist of the kind of senseless jokes and horseplay which a low type of human mind considers to be amusing, the things done being on what I may term an intellectual level with the young medium or trickster. But the crux is that in many cases it would seem to be beyond the child's mechanical ability to engineer such performances; an uneducated child in a narrow environment, in which it is fairly constantly under observation, has no chance to attain to perfection in conjuring tricks.

Have we no alternative then but to suppose that some low type of disembodied, or unembodied spirit, a hooligan spirit in fact, is actually the agent? I venture to suggest that we have such an alternative. If it be agreed that the subliminal, or subconscious self of each of us has powers which far exceed those of the ordinary, conscious self, and that it constantly exercises those powers without the ordinary self being aware of such exercise taking place, is it possible that in a diseased, and perhaps abnormally dissociated personality, the subconscious self should be able for a short time, (Poltergeist phenomena never last long), to exercise abnormal powers over material objects, without the conscious self knowing anything about it?

It has been said that 'faith' can remove mountains: what *faith* means in this connexion no one seems clearly to know, but it is at least legitimate to

surmise that it is a faculty which would be exercised by the subconscious, rather than the ordinary self. If so, is it possible that a perverted kind of faith can remove cups and saucers, and pieces of wood?

The experiments of Dr. W. J. Crawford have a distinct bearing on the subject. It appears to be scientifically as well as morally impossible that Miss Kathleen Goligher, the young medium through whom various interesting physical phenomena are obtained, tricks or cheats in any way. But there is nothing which precludes us from supposing that the subliminal or subconscious self of the medium is a co-operator, or even a sole operator in effecting the levitations and raps, though her surface consciousness is unaware of the fact. Dr. Crawford tells us that Miss K. Goligher takes a great interest in his weighing experiments; it seems to me to be a possible hypothesis that subconsciously, (and unconsciously as far as her ordinary, or supraliminal self is concerned), she responds to Dr. Crawford's requests, and carries out his orders. I venture to suggest that physical phenomena are frequently, if not always, on the same intellectual level as that of the medium through whom, or by whom, they are produced. An illiterate, or mentally deficient medium throws things about, and smashes and destroys in a senseless manner; whilst a medium of a high moral and intellectual level, like Miss Goligher, produces phenomena remarkable for intelligent and even scientific apprehension of the objects desired to be attained.

I append one other case, referred to above by Professor James as the Swanland case, which is usually classed with Poltergeist cases; though in several important particulars it radically differs from



the ordinary type. It is dealt with at length in *Proceedings* Volume VIII. I give it here in a somewhat abbreviated form.

Letters from Mr. Bristow, a master joiner, to Professor Sidgwick. "Stordale, Whittington Road, Whalley Range, Manchester, June 27, 1891. Dear Sir, I have pleasure in complying with your request to be furnished with an account of certain 'Strange experiences and eerie phenomena' which occurred years ago at the village of Swanland, some few miles from Hull, in the East Riding of Yorkshire; and which are referred to by Mr. Hebblewhite in his letter to you. The building in which the disturbances took place was of one story, about 10ft. high, with three slender tie-beams placed across at intervals, and was quite open to the roof, its length being about 40ft., and its width 17ft. or 18ft. It was a joiner's shop, in which I served an apprenticeship which had expired some twelve or fifteen months prior to the occurrence in question. The building was quite detached, being bounded on the one side by a country road, whilst the other (in the centre of which was the doorway) faced a grass field beyond which stood the nearest building in that direction, some 500 yards away. Down the centre, commencing at one end, were arranged two joiners' benches which, placed end to end, extended about half the length of the shop, leaving the other half a comparatively open space; a couple of small benches only being fixed to the wall, which were at the time unoccupied.

"On the forenoon of the day when the disturbances commenced, I could, from my position at the bench near the wall, observe every movement of my two fellow workmen in front of me, having at the same time an unobstructed view of the doorway and its approaches; when the man on my right hand

suddenly started up, saying, 'You fellows had better keep your pieces of wood to yourselves and get on with your work,' and on our asking him what he meant, he replied, 'You know very well what I mean; one of you has pelted this piece of wood at me,' picking up at the same time a small piece about an inch, or an inch and a half square. The two of us protested we had done nothing of the kind. The other man I was certain had never for a moment ceased working. Neither had I.

"The subject, being allowed to drop, was soon forgotten, when, after the lapse of a very few minutes, the second man started up as suddenly as the first one had done, exclaiming, 'Now you are at me; this piece,' (pointing to a rough block not larger than a matchbox lying at his feet) 'has come at me, and there is nobody for it but you,' meaning of course myself. There being two to one I had to bear the blame, my emphatic denial notwithstanding. I therefore laughingly said, 'You have each had your piece, it is my turn next.' The words were scarcely out of my mouth when a piece came sailing along and gave me a gentle dig in the ribs. 'I've got it at last,' I said. 'There is something mysterious about this which puzzles me beyond measure. Let us have a search for the cause,' and, acting at once on my suggestion, we set to work and searched the nooks and corners, both inside and out, so carefully that even a mouse could scarcely have escaped us, but with no result save disappointment. The mysterious disturber of our peace remained undiscovered.

We discussed the situation, getting more and more perplexed, and then returned to work. I have said that three tie-beams ran across the shop, and on one of these beams, just above my head, were piled about a dozen window sashes, which by reason of their

having lain there for several months, were covered with dust and hung with cobwebs. I had barely resumed my work when those sashes began to rattle and shake as though they would fall to pieces. We thought, 'Now we have someone, or something,' and getting a small ladder I ran up, to find the dust and cobwebs absolutely undisturbed. As I was descending, and my head being on a level with one of the beams, a piece of wood, about the size of two fingers, came dancing along, taking about two feet at a bound, on a thin board which happened to be laid on the beams, making a full stop just at my ear. Hastening down, I said to my companions in bewilderment, 'There is something more than a trick in this. There is no one but ourselves near the place, neither has there been for some time. I am half inclined to think there is something of the supernatural about it, what say you?' One of them agreed with me. The other maintained it was only a clever trick being played upon us somehow.

"Whilst this little discussion was going on, the two men were standing together some three or four yards in front of me, the sceptical one wearing an old tall silk hat, when I saw a piece come from the far corner of the roof, and knock his hat crown partly in. The expression which his suddenly elongated countenance wore at that moment was a sight not easily to be forgotten. His scepticism seemed to vanish on the instant. Occasionally a piece that had but a short time previously been cut off, falling to the floor, would leap upon the bench and come dancing along amongst the tools. I may just say we were unable to catch or lay hold of any piece when in motion, every attempt to do so was eluded. One piece I distinctly remember taking a leap from the bench to the trestle about three yards away, from which it

took a second one to some other object, finally settling down to rest at the end of the shop. Another piece moved in a line straight as the flight of an arrow, about a yard from the floor, striking noiselessly as a feather the door of a closet at the end of the shop in which nails were kept. Anon, a piece would move as though borne along on gently heaving waves. Again a piece would dash out from the most distant part of the roof, in an oblique direction, and quietly drop near your feet.

“Some three or four hours after these disturbances began, our foreman, an old Scotchman, named John Clark, came to the shop from a new building in course of erection, a considerable distance away, where he and a number of men were employed, in order to bring and explain to me a drawing which he had made on a board of a piece of work which he wanted me to execute. Full of the all-engrossing subject, I at once said, ‘John, we have had some strange work going on in this shop to-day,’ telling him what had taken place, at the same time hinting at its probable supernatural character. The old man looked at me with a serio-comic expression of countenance, and said, ‘I should have thought you had more commonsense than to believe such nonsense for a moment. I gave you credit for knowing better,’ etc., etc. He had just finished his little lecture, and was proceeding to point out the details of the drawing on the board lying in front of us, each having a finger upon it about an inch apart, when a piece with a somewhat sharp point came dashing from a distant part of the roof, and struck into the board betwixt our fingers. The hard-headed old Scot stood aghast, and for the moment almost speechless, forbearing to make further allusion to my common-sense.

“The foregoing is a fair specimen of what occurred during the first day, and this state of things was kept up with more or less frequency during the following six weeks, and always in broad daylight. Occasionally we would be left in comparative peace for a day or two, during which not more than one or two manifestations (if I may so term them) would take place. We would then have a busy season of it, as though making up for lost time. On one of these latter occasions, I remember a workman had come in from the building, and was engaged in working a French window-sill on the bench by my side, and seeing a piece about 6 in. square and 1 in. thick rise, and after describing about three fourths of a circle, say 5ft. in diameter, in its course strike the window sill with considerable force just in front of him. This was the largest piece I ever saw. Generally an ordinary matchbox would represent their bulk, although of every variety of shape. I preserved some of those mysterious missiles for a long time, one of which I remember was the end of a ladder stave 3in. or 4in. long. The last piece I ever saw was of oak, about 1 in. thick and from 2 in. to 2½ in. square. It came in the afternoon from a distant corner of the roof towards me, and in its course described what might be likened to a geometrical stair or corkscrew of about 18in. in diameter. I may here remark that in every instance, without exception, the moving pieces had been cut off work in the shop. Never was a piece seen to come in at the doorway.

“The fact of pieces, in number more than I can tell, getting from the floor at your feet at the one end of the shop, to the farthest point of the roof at the other end of the shop, in some mysteriously invisible fashion, seemed to be one of the strangest features of

the whole thing. Never in a solitary instance did any of our workmen, of whom there were sometimes six or eight in the shop; nor any of our watchful visitors who favoured us with their company during the course of those six weeks of disturbance, detect the slightest indication of anything moving upward towards the roof. And yet a piece cut off, and falling on the floor would, in spite of the lynx-eyed watchers, speedily make its way to the roof at the other end, and come dashing down from a point where there had been nothing a minute before. As the time wore on we became accustomed to the thing, and the movement of those blocks of wood, which seemed to be instinct with life, and in some few instances almost with intelligence, caused but little remark. It were easy to multiply instances, but those which I have given being fair specimens of the whole, may well suffice. In the foregoing plain, unvarnished, narrative of facts there may be points upon which you may desire further information, and I have only to say that I shall be pleased at any time to answer any questions, or supply any additional information which it may be within my power to give.

“To have any additional light thrown upon, or further explanation given of what I deem to have been the most remarkable episode in my life, would afford unspeakable pleasure to—Dear sir, yours faithfully,

John Bristow.”

Mr. Myers called on Mr. Bristow, and wrote, “Manchester, July 31, 1891. I have just called on Mr. Bristow, and he has kindly supplied me with some further facts relating to the disturbances at Swanland. He has also presented me with his manuscript notes, dated 1854. These notes seem

wholly concordant with his account sent to Professor Sidgwick." Mr. Bristow told Mr. Myers that the cause of the disturbances was supposed to be the ghost of young John Gray, nephew of John Gray, one of the partners in the business; the other being William Habbershaw. Young John Gray died of consumption, soon after the term of his apprenticeship to his uncle had terminated. His father, a farmer, had previously died a bankrupt. "Some few weeks before the disturbances began, rumour said that his father's creditors had not received all the money which ought to have been paid to them, and that his uncle was responsible for this. Mr. Bristow had been told on good authority that young John Gray's last request had been that his uncle would repay the money due to his, (young John Gray's) father's creditors. This, I understood, the elder John Gray did not at once do. I can personally vouch for his excessive terror when the disturbances began. One day especially, he took me with him driving to a job a couple of miles or so from our workshop, and began to talk to me about the phenomena, as though he wished to get me to put them down to some natural cause. His manner was that of a man almost petrified with terror. I felt convinced that he had had disturbances of which we knew nothing.

"He repaid the money—as was said—and the disturbances at once ceased. Of course I cannot vouch at first hand for the repayment of the money, but on one point I can speak from observation. Before the disturbances began there was no tombstone to young John Gray. When they began the uncle put one up in North Ferriby churchyard, which I suppose is there now."

Mr. Bristow mentioned the names of one or two

men who might possibly be still living at Swanland, who were witnesses of the disturbances: and on September 29, 1891, Mrs. Henry Sidgwick, and Miss E. W. Allen, visited the neighbourhood, and made the following report, the same day:—

“ We first visited the churchyard of North Ferriby, in order to discover the tombstone of John Gray. We found two tombstones which bear on our case, one to the memory of Stephen Gray, died August, 1827, aged 27, and his wife, who died in 1842; and to his son, John Gray, who died, aged 22, on January 5th, 1849. The other, exactly similar, was to the memory of John Gray, died 1851, aged 48, and his wife Anne, who died 1854, aged 45.

“ We then went to Swanland, and first addressed ourselves to an elderly blacksmith who was looking out of his shop, and said we were in search of John Turner, who, we believed, could tell us about some wonderful occurrences of pieces of wood flying about the shop, etc. John Turner had been dead some years, it appears; but our blacksmith remembered hearing about the thing, and thought some of the old people could tell us about it. He called an old cobbler, Edward Harper, who lived a few doors off, who had not personally seen anything, but remembered the affair well, and the sensation it caused, people coming over from Hull to see the place. He knew John Bristow, and was interested in hearing of him, and we gathered that Mr. Bristow had been both liked and respected in the place. Harper remembered also how John Crowther had interested himself in the thing, and after being sceptical had become convinced of its mysterious character. But John Crowther is now dead, and Harper could not think of anyone now alive who had actually seen the movements going on, except “ Tommy Andrews.” Harper’s account of



what went on was graphic, and corresponded well with Mr. Bristow's, except that he increased the size of the pieces of wood to the size of a man's head. The belief that the disturbances arose from wishes of John Gray's respecting money, being unfulfilled by old John Gray, was evidently the current belief in the village at the time.

"We then went to see Thomas Andrews—an old man, rheumatic, and retired from work. He impressed us as a clever, sensible sort of man. He has a very expressive face, and I can quite imagine his being the man 'the expression of whose elongated countenance' Mr. Bristow speaks of. Miss Allen remembers that Harper spoke of Andrews' hat being knocked in by one of the pieces of wood, but we neglected to ask him about this, nor did I inquire of him about specific phenomena mentioned by Mr. Bristow, but rather tried to draw out his own independent account of things. He told us that the pieces of wood certainly did fly about for the space of five or six weeks; that he was working in the shop at the time, and believed he was one of the first to see them, that he believed it to be a trick at first. I asked whether he was sure it was not a trick; and he said he was sure, because they searched, and no one could have played it, and because the pieces of wood could not have taken the course they did had they been thrown. To illustrate this he made us hold his stick, and showed how a piece would come along and go round the stick as it were, and 'no one could throw like that.' Asked as to explanations, said that some gave one and some another—but the only one we got out of him was the one about John Gray junior's unfulfilled wishes, and the tombstone, which he said was afterwards put up. This was his own belief as to the explanation; but he said that John

Gray, senior, when asked about it, shuffled the matter.

"The only specific incident I remember his mentioning was about the Scotch foreman and the piece that came down as he was looking at the plan.

"Altogether, all we saw and heard went to confirm Mr. Bristow's account, except that the tombstone, which Mr. Andrews also said had been put up to John Gray junior after the disturbances, was really put up to his father and mother as well; and we cannot say whether John Gray senior really erected it to the whole family then, or whether he added the name of the young man then, which led to the rumour.

"Eleanor Mildred Sidgwick.

"Eleanor Wardle Allen.

"P.S. October 1st.—I have just been looking through Mr. Bristow's rough notes, and see that Thomas Andrews was the man who, according to him, had his hat knocked in. Miss Allen did not know this, so that the fact of Edward Harper, according to her recollection, remembering that Andrews was said to have had his hat knocked in, must be regarded as a confirmation of Mr. Bristow's account. It is also in Mr. Bristow's favour that a witness he did not refer us to, T. Andrews, should confirm him as he did.

E. M. S."

As regards the point raised by Mrs. Sidgwick as to the age of the tombstones, I may remark that there are fashions in tombstones, as may be noted in any country churchyard, and it is most improbable that a tombstone which had been erected when the first interment took place in 1827 would be 'exactly similar' in form to one which could not have been erected before 1851. The similarity suggests that 'young John Gray' was buried with his father and

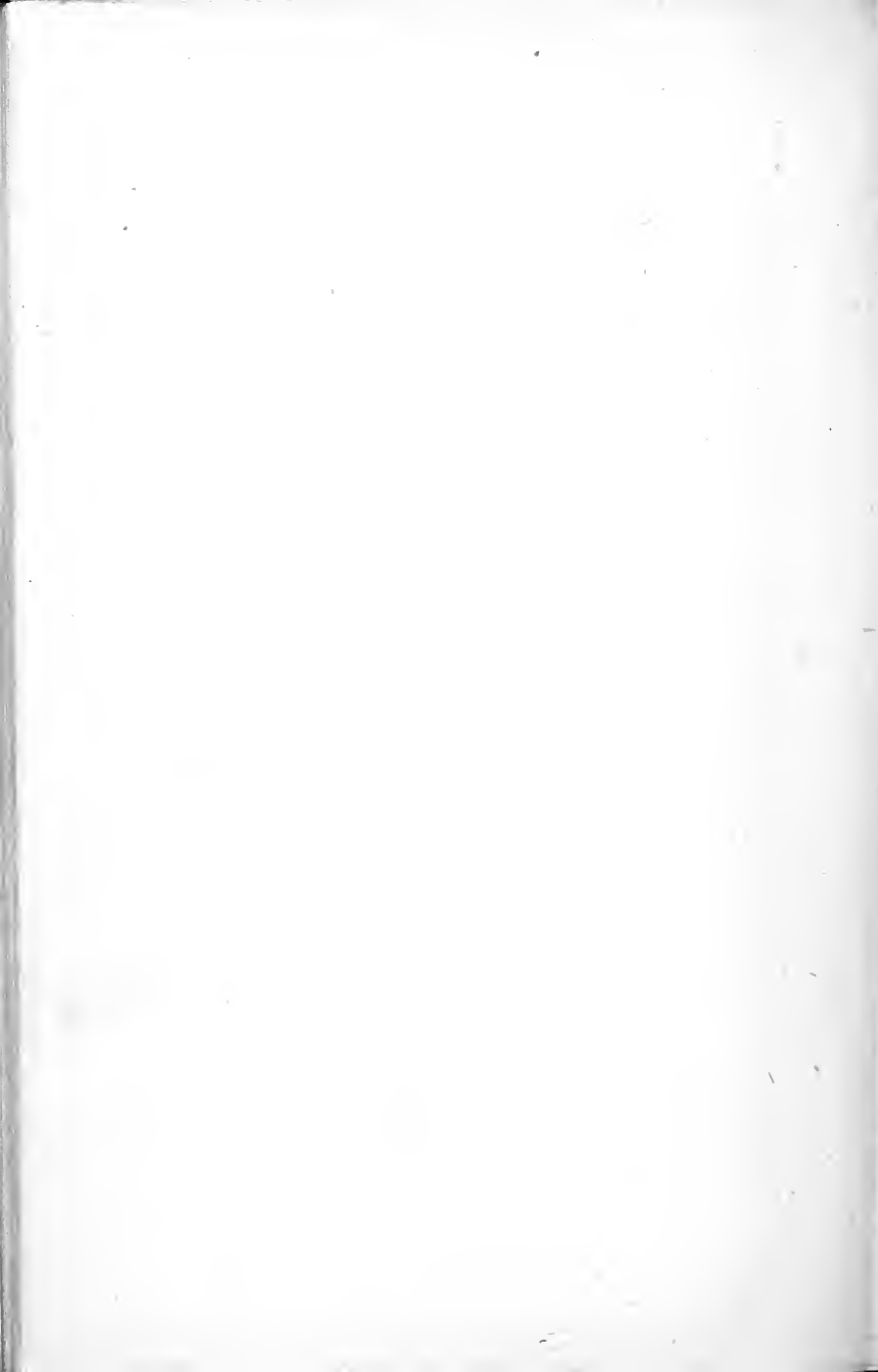
mother in a tombstoneless grave; his uncle, as Mr. Bristow stated, erecting the stone after the disturbances in the workshop, and that the names of all the three persons buried therein were engraved thereon. Very shortly afterwards the uncle, 'old John Gray,' died, and it would be perfectly natural for an exactly similar tombstone to be erected over his grave.

I have said that the Swanland case differs in many respects from the ordinary type of Poltergeist case; in particular it must be noted that though as usual a young person is the supposed originator, the youth commonly supposed in the neighbourhood to be causing the disturbances in the workshop, was not alive in the flesh, though the place of his supposed post mortem activities was the workshop in which he had served his apprenticeship, and with which he was consequently closely connected. *If* physical phenomena are caused by semi-physical influences from the medium; and *if*, as is thought by many, a personal and perhaps semi-physical influence is left by each one of us in our former abodes, then *perhaps* enough of the semi-physical personality of young John Gray remained in the workshop to serve his disembodied spirit in moving pieces of wood about, and so calling attention to the non-fulfilment of his dying request.

THE END









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